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The Shape of Things

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THE SINKING OF THE MAR CANTABRICO WAS an ironic event. The report, as we go to press, that it was loaded with airplanes and munitions is probably untrue. We have good authority for believing that it had landed the arms cargo in Spain a week before, and was carrying a shipload of Basque refugees (Franco supporters) to France. This was in accordance with an agreement reached by the loyalist Basque Catholic government for an exchange of prisoners with Franco. If our information proves true, it shows the confusion among the rebel forces.

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THE INTERNATIONAL SEA AND LAND PATROL of Spain, intended to keep foreign arms and soldiers out of the country, waits on the settlement of details. The delay looks like sabotage. The Germans and Italians, not yet sure that Franco will win, wish to send no more supplies; while England is sure of nothing, not even its own mind. This postponement operates to the disadvantage of the legitimate government of Spain. The Italians and Germans enjoy an overwhelming preponderance in the air and have approximately 70,000 troops on the ground. Nevertheless, while the government is making headway at Toledo and Talavera de la Reina, the rebels are registering no advances anywhere; they are hard-pressed at Oviedo and at Malaga have been prevented altogether from making the threatened drive on Valencia. But the most encouraging development is the projected fusion of the National Anarchist trade unions (C. N. T.) with the Socialist-Communist trade unions (U. G. T.), which reflects a readiness on the part of the Anarchists to accept more rigid discipline at the front and in the rear. The Caballero government is reinforced, and progress toward a united military command is accelerated by these changes. The loyal soldiers have been fighting better because they feel that the political parties are squabbling less, and because the autonomy of various party regiments, which allowed them to decide whether or not they would accept military orders, is vanishing.

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A SITDOWN IN THE CHRYSLER AND HUDSON plants, reported as we go to press, is the logical outcome of the General Motors victory. It means merely that General Motors is not the whole automobile industry. Since the C. I. O. is determined but reasonable we are certain that the struggle will not be protracted.

YOU MAY BE A NONCOMBATANT IN THE next war. Not a hero dying gloriously in the trenches, but a hungry civilian standing in line before a bakery shop or a grocery store hoping against hope that the supply of bread holds out or that there will still be milk for the children and the old people at home, who are also noncombatants. Americans may never have to live through the misery of a city under fire from the air. But international fascism plays no favorites. Bombs are falling in Madrid today. If Madrid succumbs to fascism, bombs will fall in other democratic cities tomorrow. The committee for *The Nation's* Food Ship does not ask you to help send guns to Spain. It does ask every American who hates fascism to help send food to Spanish women and children. *They must be fed.* The response so far to our appeal has been generous. We have had some large contributions and many, many small ones. It is these latter, we suspect, from average Americans who hate fascism, that will seem most reassuring to average Spaniards who are fighting off fascism almost with bare hands. We should like to have on the list of donors to the Food Ship Fund the name of every *Nation* subscriber and reader. It would constitute a manifesto of human sympathy that the whole world could read. Help us write it.

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MAYOR LAGUARDIA'S NOW HISTORIC WORDS suggesting a "chamber of horrors" niche for the "brown-shirted fanatic," whatever their motivation, undoubtedly reflect the consensus of American public opinion. But however heartily we may wish to applaud the Mayor's spirit, we must recognize the unwisdom of his remarks. As part of his program Hitler itches to stir up anti-Semitism in this country. Conscious and articulate anti-Semitism is not indigenous in America, but a statement like the Mayor's offers Hitler a handle that he is more than ready to grasp. Just how ready he is the *Angriff's* specific threat shows: "We could take an interest in America that would not be pleasant. LaGuardia's racial comrades had better be on the watch against us." Fortunately in this instance the outburst of what Hugh Johnson calls the "push-button press" in Germany was so epileptic as to defeat its own ends. Attacks on LaGuardia—and for good measure on Governor Lehman and Secretary Morgenthau—couched in terms so disgusting that the *New York Times* correspondent said that if literally translated they would be unfit to print; wholesale abuse of American institutions and customs; above all, advice to our government to abolish the traditional American right of free speech have simply had the effect of turning this country more against Hitler than it was before.

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MUSSOLINI'S TRIUMPHAL MARCH THROUGH his North African possessions will be capped, as this is read, by the dedication of a victory arch in the Libyan desert. The taste of triumph is now no doubt sweetened in his mouth by the Italian reprisals in Addis Ababa after the wounding of Marshal Graziani. They constitute perhaps the most insane brutality of our lifetime. According

to the *New York Times* the Italian troops engaged in an orgy of slaughter and destruction in which 6,000 Ethiopians were massacred and their homes burned. The rampage lasted for three days, with officers exhorting the men to murder every native man, woman, or child they could find. The progress through Libya is an example of Il Duce's avid aping of Julius Caesar. But it alters Roman tradition in one respect. Whereas Caesar used to drag captured slaves, chained to his chariot wheels, through the streets of Rome, Mussolini considers that method antiquated. He simply wipes them all out ahead of time.

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DOCTORS ARE WORRIED FOR FEAR THE DRIVE against venereal disease being conducted by Surgeon General Parran may not only wipe out the disease but incidentally the medical profession along with it. They fear that the advocacy by Dr. Parran and other public health officers of free clinics to report and treat the estimated 19,000,000 cases of syphilis in this country is a deliberate threat to private practice. In an article in *Medical Economics* it is stated that Dr. Parran and "certain unofficial groups" want public control over venereal diseases as a step toward socialized medicine. Admitting that less than 10 per cent of infected cases are under treatment by licensed physicians, the article nevertheless insists that free clinics should be limited to finding and reporting cases while treatment should be left to private physicians. This reminds us strongly of a letter made public by the La Follette investigating committee wherein one tear-gas manufacturer suggested to another that the President be enjoined from "stopping all of these strikes" because "his actions are absolutely in restraint of trade—that is, as far as we are concerned." If the article in *Medical Economics* actually represents the attitude of the American medical profession, it is the surest way we know of hastening the advent of state medicine.

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THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE RHINELAND COUP by the Hitler regime finds the world increasingly anxious with regard to the next Nazi putsch. The latest scare has occurred in Hungary, where an official investigation has discovered a powerful underground Nazi movement, well supplied with funds and receiving substantial support from high government officials. Although the disclosure of the facts appears to have warded off any danger of an immediate coup, the presence of many close friends of the late Premier Gömbös within the ranks of the conspirators has prevented Premier Daranyi from taking effective steps to suppress the movement. Elsewhere the situation is not so immediately threatening. In Austria the over-enthusiastic welcome given Baron von Neurath appears to have reacted, temporarily at least, against the local Nazis, and in Rumania the demonstrations of the fascist Iron Guards in favor of General Franco seem also to have backfired. Left to itself, it is doubtful whether the pro-Nazi movement in any of these three countries would be important. But it is evident that help is being received. Reports from each country tell of huge expenditures of

money in support of anti-Semitic, pro-Nazi activities. Only constant alertness on the part of the democratic countries can prevent Hitler from launching on his next adventure in this unhappy region.

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A STIR HAS BEEN CAUSED IN FINANCIAL circles by the action of the SEC in listing the refunding bond issue of the German government with a statement calling attention to the unrecorded German debt. The commission's estimate of this hidden debt as five billion marks on June 30, 1935, seems over-conservative. The *Banker*, a conservative British publication, recently devoted an entire issue to a comprehensive survey of present-day Germany. It calculated the total expenditures for armaments in the past four years—an item previously of little importance in the budget—at thirty-one billion marks. The debt was listed at sixteen billion. Other estimates of it run from twenty to twenty-five billion. It would be a mistake, however, to assume from these figures that Germany is on the verge of inflation or collapse. A totalitarian state has the power to check inflation whenever it chooses to do so. Nor need it fear a panic on the financial markets. Finance is capable of almost unlimited manipulation. Germany's economic weakness is far more fundamental in character. The country lacks grain of all kinds, fats, and raw materials, and no amount of juggling can replace the human and natural resources that have been drained away in armaments.

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PASSAGE OF THE NAVAL-SUPPLY BILL OF \$526,555,000 by the House of Representatives calls attention to our utter lack of a sensible naval policy. The navy's spokesmen say we must adopt a naval building program on a "second-to-none" basis. Even if there were any reason for such a policy, it is obvious, in the light of the British Admiralty's announcement of a program involving twenty-five capital ships by 1942, that the appropriation passed by the House does not meet it. And even if it did, what possible eventuality could warrant a second-to-none navy? The only two countries which could conceivably muster the means to attack our shores—Great Britain and Japan—could not conceivably want anything from us that would be worth attacking us to get. As pointed out in the first issue of *Amerasia*, the new monthly review of America and the Far East, our naval policy has been one long contradiction of our political foreign policy. Politically we do not even contemplate the possibility of war with Great Britain; yet we insist on naval parity with it. Politically we raise the cry "freedom of the seas"; yet we should have to have a navy not equal to but bigger than anyone else's to guarantee us that. Politically the issues between us and Japan are the Open Door and, by virtue of the Nine Power Treaty, the integrity of China. In spite of ample opportunity we have never used our navy in defense of either. When the naval-supply bill comes up in the Senate, its members should demand some clarification of these absurd and costly contradictions.

THE METHODS A HEARST NEWSPAPER USES came home last week to the *Nation* staff. Max Lerner, one of the editors, spoke in Washington on the Supreme Court before a group of the diplomatic corps. He took the position that, viewed by itself, the President's plan did not go far enough, but that along with an eventual constitutional amendment it would solve the problems of the judicial power. The *Washington Herald*, a Hearst paper, headed its account of the speech, "Editor Hits Court Plan," tore remarks out of their context, re-shuffled them to its heart's content, and twisted what was left beyond recognition. This is freedom of the press.

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MOST OF THE DRAMATIC CRITICS, AMONG them our own, praised Arthur Kober's "Having Wonderful Time" for its "tenderness." Their unanimity made us aware that "tenderness" seems to be coming in again. Ten years ago it was a fighting word so far as self-respecting playwrights were concerned. They all aspired to earn the epithet "brutal," and anyone who was called less than "stark" was foredoomed to disgrace and failure. Today terms like "amiable," "engaging," and even "pleasant" actually get into blurbs, so there is no telling where it all will end. Maxwell Anderson's "High Tor" is positively playful, even if his other two plays are not. And among the other big successes of the moment not one is "grim," if you leave out of account those two classics of a past age, "Richard II" and "Tobacco Road." Only Mr. Benchley seems to be holding out against sweetness and light. He told his readers in the *New Yorker* that he walked out on a certain play about the keeper of a bawdy house who had a heart of gold, "not because I don't like plays about keepers of bawdy houses but because I don't like plays about hearts of gold."

Europe's Economic War

THE possibility that a military conflict may be postponed for a year, or even longer, has led Europe to turn its attention to the basic economic struggle which ultimately must decide its destiny. All the great powers have taken steps to prepare for the final showdown, but the measures have been most dramatic in Germany and France. After following a more or less consistent policy in the direction of self-sufficiency for years, the Hitler government has suddenly reversed itself, restricted its imports of raw materials for armaments and *Ersatz*, increased its imports of foodstuffs and industrial raw materials, and launched a drive to regain its neglected export markets. It is hoped that a revival of export trade may make possible a larger inflow of necessary foodstuffs, and that ultimately the country will thus be able to purchase a larger amount of strategic raw materials, of which it is desperately short.

Simultaneously with its efforts to strengthen its own economy, Germany has embarked on a desperate attempt to weaken the French economic structure. The Blum

government is admittedly facing a difficult budgetary situation. Armament and social expenditures have risen to a much greater extent than revenues. The huge gold reserves of a few years ago have largely been dissipated by the many crises of the franc. Hitler's contempt for social democracy has apparently led him to believe that France is bound to pass through an acute financial crisis such as Germany faced in 1931, which will ultimately prepare the ground for fascism. Consequently, he is reported to be using a portion of Germany's slim foreign exchange to depress French credit in the hope of precipitating the crisis.

Actually, the recent measures taken by the Blum government indicate that the French economic situation is not nearly so unfavorable as the reactionaries, both in France and abroad, have tried to picture it. The restoration of gold payments and the promise to redeem the new defense bonds in gold indicate a strength not equaled by many countries today. France is second only to the United States in gold reserves. The economic revival promises to balance the budget. Industrial production was 4 per cent higher in December than in the corresponding month a year ago. The engineering trades were running 10 per cent above the previous year, and railway receipts and carloadings showed a marked increase. Unemployment has dropped by more than 15 per cent. The revaluation of the franc makes it possible to wipe out the budgetary deficit and frustrate the efforts of reactionaries to deprive the government of credit.

Meanwhile, Neville Chamberlain's plan for financing Britain's vast armament program has created for that country a situation potentially similar to that from which the Nazis are trying to escape. A huge loan of £400,000,000 is to be floated on the basis of an expansion of credit which will be undeniably inflationary in its consequences. As the pound sinks and commodity prices rise, the raw materials which are needed for England's moribund export industries will become unobtainable. The cost of living will rise more rapidly than wages until the country finds itself with an abundance of cannon but with little bread and a seriously damaged national economy.

By and large, France and England still have a tremendous advantage in the economic struggle which is developing. They are superior to Germany in natural resources; they have not as yet squandered their wealth in a suicidal attempt to create an impossible national self-sufficiency; they have ample gold; and they have been able thus far to maintain a much higher standard of living for the masses. Germany's only hope, economically, would lie in a complete abandonment of Nazi economics and an attempt—with British and French aid—to regain its former place in the markets of the world. But this can only be achieved through cooperation. In attempting to weaken France, Hitler is playing a desperate game. If he wins and France is thrown into confusion, Germany will almost certainly be carried down in the economic maelstrom. For even enemy nations cannot isolate themselves from each other economically. And if he loses, as seems almost certain in view of his lack of resources, he will have played his last card.

Roosevelt on the Radio

IN terms of sheer skill, Mr. Roosevelt's radio speech on March 4 at the Democratic victory dinner ranks high even among the Roosevelt speeches. It was great oratory—which means that it made use of every resource of speaker and occasion, and there was even in it a persuasiveness which sometimes went beyond its material. We know several persons who refused to listen to it on the radio, lest by its amenities they be seduced into agreement with it. They preferred to see it in sober cold newsprint the next morning, where they could meet it behind the fortifications of their favorite columnists. Mr. Roosevelt on the radio is a political force to be reckoned with—especially when he is fighting for the common people, to whom the radio alone can furnish him access.

We said last week, commenting on the interview Mr. Roosevelt gave Arthur Krock, that much of its strength lay in its deep and reasonable seriousness. We wish Mr. Roosevelt had couched his radio speech in the same strain. It was a great "fighting speech." But its very militancy lent fuel to the charges that Mr. Roosevelt could brook no interference. The President spoke like a man with his back against the wall—like one of those incredible cavaliers out of Dumas who is never at his best as a swordsman until he is trapped and surrounded by the mercenaries of his enemies. One thing, however, may be said. It needed a fighting speech to put an end to the talk of the President's craftiness, and his intent to establish a dictatorship by indirection. Here, finally, was hard and straight hitting.

There will still be many to question the President's sincerity. We are not among them. There can be no doubt that Mr. Roosevelt now has the habit of perspective, and sees himself as a historian twenty-five years from now will see him. He sees his historic function as that of stabilizing capitalist democracy by reforming it. We believe he is right in this view of himself; right also in his belief that the continued power of the Supreme Court is the surest way to capitalist collapse and civil war. We agree moreover that the action taken must be taken now, and not postponed until the incredibly slow wheels of the amending process have ground out permission to go forward. As Professor Llewellyn points out on another page, whatever may have been the alternatives once, Mr. Roosevelt has now set the issue. If his proposal is lost, all chance of an amendment will also be lost.

But, once the road ahead is clear, what sort of conveyance will the nation use? It is significant that four years after his first inaugural speech the President returns to the identical phrase he used on that day—"what we must have is action and action now." It is a good pragmatic formula that may lead almost anywhere. Four years ago it led to the NRA. There is no assurance that in the next four years it will lead much farther.

There is, however, a chance. Surveying the past four years Mr. Roosevelt may see them as having projected a legislative program adequate in itself, but which it is now his business to consolidate. Or he may see a sequence

of trial and error, only partly successful, with the next four years offering a chance to push farther with a deepened experience and maturity. If the latter is the more accurate picture of the President's mind, there may be a significance in the fact that he made his speech at a Democratic victory dinner. Here was a warning to his party that if it could not move along with the people's needs, it would die as the Ice Age animals died when they could not adapt themselves to the new world climate. In the long run we doubt whether his party will heed Mr. Roosevelt's warning. The party of the future is being forged today in the mills and factories of the nation.

Is the State Department Favoring Franco?

VERY convincing evidence is available that President Roosevelt and Secretary Hull are opposed to fascism. At Buenos Aires the President made a ringing plea for democracy. He has made other speeches which have stung the fascist powers. But the Administration's deeds do violence to the President's convictions.

The State Department permitted oil, an instrument of war, to be exported to Italy, thus allowing Mussolini to add Abyssinia to his empire. Yet it will not permit humanitarian doctors and nurses to help the Spanish democrats. Not by the widest stretch of the imagination could the professional activities of a medical unit be conceived of as likely to involve us in war or even in diplomatic trouble. The members of such a unit go at their own risk. If they are killed or captured, that is their bad luck. Doctors and nurses have always gone to foreign battlefields to minister to the wounded. For our State Department, with the President's knowledge, to discard this tradition is evidence that it has bowed to the American reactionaries who sympathize with General Franco.

A letter to the Spanish Medical Committee from the State Department urged Americans to give their money for medical aid to the International Red Cross so that it could send medical men to Spain. It is all right, then, for Swedes or Frenchmen or Britishers to go with ambulances to Spain, but not for Americans. If the International Red Cross invited an American blood-transfusion expert or a head-wound specialist to cooperate with it in Spain, the State Department would refuse him a passport. We suspect strongly that the State Department made this ruling because the International Red Cross presumably functions impartially in both camps. It wants American trade unionists, liberals, and anti-fascists to contribute medical aid for Franco.

As far as we know, the International Red Cross has not done any medical work in loyalist Spain, and the civil war is in its eighth month. Its activity has been limited to negotiations for the release of the Spanish fascists, nobles, landowners, and other reactionaries who took refuge in the foreign missions of Madrid to wait for Franco's triumphal entry. Since this event has been

postponed too long for their comfort, they would like to go to France, whence they might join the rebel forces. The Red Cross is ready to assist them in this endeavor.

The continuous bombing of civilian Madrid is the worst atrocity in modern times, and it pursues no military objective. Americans who are shocked by this ruthlessness want to aid Madrid. The State Department thinks it can stop them. It thereby displays its true political colors. Any assistance to loyalist Spain, be it in the form of medicine or food, strengthens the legal government in its struggle with the fascists. The State Department dislikes that.

If the American government simply wants to restrain its citizens from going into the war theater, newspaper correspondents should be kept out too. They can also be killed or captured. We ought to depend solely on foreign sources of information. We should recall all diplomatic representatives and close the embassy in Madrid. Instead, only a fortnight ago we sent a consul into Malaga after its occupation by Franco, with whom we have no official relations. Does the White House approve of that?

Many nations dispatched field hospitals to Abyssinia during the late war. An American was close adviser to Haile Selassie. American journalists worked in Addis Ababa. The State Department allowed Mussolini openly to recruit Italians in the United States for fighting in Ethiopia. But God forbid that anything of value should go to the people of Spain, who are stemming a foreign fascist invasion! Franco might resent it. The Catholic church might think it sinful.

The Catholic church is the key. Because he must overcome Catholic hostility to his Supreme Court proposal, the President yields to the church on Spain. The Supreme Court issue is important. But in the long run, Spain is also important. You cannot combat reaction at home and encourage it to gobble up all Europe. If as a result of the prolongation of the Spanish struggle Europe is involved in war, we may be able to keep out for a while, but the war scare and the war atmosphere will enable American reactionaries to put an end to civil liberties and to insist on more militarism and preparedness. The battle for liberalism in the United States is bound up with the anti-fascist cause in Europe. To make concessions to the Catholic church's hostile stand toward the Spanish people in order to win it over to acceptance of the Supreme Court shake-up is a vain effort and mistaken strategy.

Democracy in the version of it supported by the Catholic church and Hearst should have died with the President's smashing victory at the polls last November. The hamstringing of democracy by the bureaucracy of the State Department runs counter to the recent national election, to the will of the working class as revealed in the C. I. O. victories, and to the vast, expressed and unexpressed American sympathy for the Spanish republic and its democratically elected government. President Roosevelt wishes to prevent the Supreme Court from interfering with his efforts to adapt American economy to modern needs. In this endeavor we support him. But it would be wise for him to eject from the State Department and our consular service the fascist-minded reactionaries who are obstructing his foreign policy.

Steel Victory—and After

THE capitulation of United States Steel to the Committee for Industrial Organization is an event spectacular in itself and highly significant in the national picture. The question of how it came about is still uppermost in the minds of most people. The answer is complex. The C. I. O. forces have been the shock troops in the broad movement that has opened up the fortresses of steel and automobiles and is now sweeping across the whole industrial landscape; but it could not have been so successful if it had not had the support of a great section of the middle class, which in a period of returning prosperity following upon severe depression has joined its strength with that of labor. In November labor and its allies voted overwhelmingly and consciously for a broad program of social legislation which would increase security and earning power. Collective bargaining is an efficient instrument, as well as a democratic method, for achieving these ends. As for the element of suddenness, first in the automobile and now in the steel development, it is directly related to the political backwardness of a country ripe for social change. The organization of the basic industries and the setting up of extensive social legislation, both of which are old history in other democratic countries, have been held back here as by a dam because of peculiar American historical factors. Once the dam was breached by the greatest (so far) of all crises, both were bound to come with a rush.

The Roosevelt Administration has of late been giving vigorous expression to the desires of the labor and middle-class groups that reelected it. It is, for one thing, easier to be antagonistic to big business in a period of growing prosperity than in any other capitalist season. The most important present manifestation is the fight on the Supreme Court—which is designed to save the whole network of social legislation upheld or authorized by the November landslide. This network of legislation was a crucial background element in the steel and automobile victories, especially when joined with the circumstance that labor without question elected Governor Murphy of Michigan and Governor Earle of Pennsylvania. Today the union can rent a hall in any steel town, and Governor Earle proclaims his solidarity with labor at every opportunity. Meanwhile the La Follette committee has relentlessly exposed the labor spy and told who hires him, while the National Labor Relations Board has gone thoroughly into the delicate structure of the company union. Steel has lost both its first line of defense against trade unions, the state police apparatus, and its second, the federal government's indifference. United States Steel's last serious attempt to stem the tide came just after the election when it granted, through its company union, a rise in pay tied to the cost-of-living index. The attempt was a dismal failure, and it was then that the corporation resigned itself to the C. I. O. and began negotiations.

Aside from the general political climate which has literally turned night into day in many a steel town there was another pressure which was probably the determining

one in the whole matter. We refer to the desire for great profit. The Administration used the pressure of the Walsh-Healey Act. United States Steel wants government contracts. In addition there was the pressure of a whole world just beginning an armament race. Great Britain particularly is working against time. The General Motors strike showed United States Steel how tightly an industry can be closed down with this new-fangled industrial unionism—and after it was all over the union won anyway. Customers who are feverishly preparing for the next war do not want to run the risk of not having orders filled on schedule, and the local business community thinks the corporation will have to give in some time. United States Steel scratched its head. With the Administration so set on it, and the S. W. O. C. so obviously bent on seeing it through, collective bargaining looked inevitable. Why retard recovery and lose British orders by allowing a strike, especially when the added labor cost can be passed on to the consumer and labor can be blamed for the higher prices? The great irony of the labor victory is that it was made possible, in part, by the next war.

So much for the reasons why United States Steel signed up. The settlement signifies no change of heart toward labor and labor organization. It merely means that the fight will be conducted henceforth on a different plane. We shall probably see now the fostering of the "yellow" or "independent" union which has been much used in Europe. There will be a rising movement for the incorporation of unions and for other legal restraints, with the British trades-disputes act serving as a model. The most insidious campaign will consist in the attempt to buy off the leaders of labor with lucrative jobs or political favors. It has worked here and in Europe.

This danger is a long-range one which will become a problem in a time of crisis. The immediate weapon against labor is the rise in prices. Labor's middle-class allies will be first to feel the pinch. In an article on the settlement a *New York Times* reporter wrote: "It is said that Mr. Lewis [in his talks with Myron C. Taylor] showed a broad point of view in discussing problems faced by the two men and was fully aware that the higher wages which he asked for labor could only be obtained through higher prices" for steel. Assuming that Mr. Lewis has been correctly represented, this broad view in favor of a monopoly whose margin of profit has never been small is disquieting, especially since the Administration seems to share it. In the present instance it may not be a serious factor, but the tendency to raise prices every time labor wins higher pay will increase neither genuine purchasing power nor the prestige of trade unions. We must distribute the wealth, not inflate it.

We may now expect the rapid unionization of textiles, aluminum, oil, and other major industries. We may also expect a new spurt in social legislation. For a time the Administration will continue to give scope to the desires of labor and the middle class. Eventually, however, it will seem necessary to rein in. At that moment labor, to hold its gains, will be forced to strike out for itself politically. Will labor be ready for the test?

WASHINGTON WEEKLY

BY PAUL W. WARD

A New WPA Set-up

Washington, March 7

A WHOLLY new type of unemployment relief program is being cooked up here. Harry L. Hopkins is bossing the job as chief cook. He has as active assistants a number of important mayors, such as LaGuardia, and several equally important governors, such as Lehman of New York and La Follette of Wisconsin. In addition, he has recruited more than 125 members of Congress, including Representatives Maverick, Pierce, Voorhis, O'Day, Hill, and Coffee, who today issued a statement outlining the new plan without identifying its sources or the fact that it is part of a grand design. It remains to be seen whether Roosevelt will stand for it and whether the opposition to it of his fiscal advisers can be overcome. Heretofore the Administration's relief forces have worked out their programs only to find them chopped up by the fiscal boys to fit an over-all budgetary pattern. Those plotting the new program intend that the fiscal boys shall share responsibility for its making at least until their education in relief problems has progressed to the point where they see those problems in relation to the whole national economy.

The new program is based on the assumptions that we are going to keep our capitalist system without material change; that under any such system, with profits as sole determinants, private industry is never again going to provide jobs for all those able and willing to work; that, as a result, we are going to have on our hands a permanent body of several million unemployed; and that it is the duty of the federal government to provide work for those millions. It is proposed, therefore, that permanent machinery be set up for fulfilling that duty. The central point of departure from current and past experiments in the field of unemployment relief, however, is not in the permanency factor of the new program under consideration but in its proposal to abolish the means test and approach the problem from a straight job-making angle. Under the new program the federal government would set out to employ all the able-bodied unemployed in the country, irrespective of need. The WPA no longer would look to the relief agencies to certify persons from their rolls for WPA jobs. Destitution would cease to be a prerequisite to WPA employment. Instead, the WPA would draw its workers from the rolls of the United States Employment Service, and any able-bodied person could qualify, including the possessor of a job in private industry who preferred WPA conditions. The program in its entirety is much larger than that. It envisages a broadening of the Social Security Act to extend the benefits of unemployment insurance and old-

age pensions to millions not covered at present. It also encompasses an expansion and refinement of the Administration's agricultural policies to reduce to a minimum that huge percentage of our farm and rural population which under present circumstances can never be self-supporting. Finally, it presupposes the establishment of a broad and flexible program of public works geared to regional and national fluctuations in private employment, to the work capacities of the men and women who never again will get private jobs because of age and prolonged unemployment, and to the needs of the nation in conservation and improvement of its natural resources. It is a vast program, and its vastness perhaps can be gathered best from the fact that the men behind it are talking in terms of an annual outlay topping \$4,000,000,000 in contrast to the hope expressed by Roosevelt that the federal relief outlay for the year beginning July 1 could be kept in the neighborhood of \$1,500,000,000.

Although undoubtedly appalled by the expense involved, Roosevelt is said to be attracted by the program's promise to act as a support and lever under the nation's wage structure and give force to his ambition to see the nation's standard of living definitely pegged to higher levels when he quits the White House in 1941. There can be no doubt that past and present activities of the Administration in the field of unemployment relief have accounted for much of the current recovery and for almost all of the upward trend in wages. They also have given immeasurable support to the unionization drive.

Details of the program can be worked out only after Congress gives the signal and fixes the program's limits. It is proposed to make it a completely federalized program. The theory behind this phase of the program is strongly supported by statistics showing that if matching contributions from local sources are required, the program can never be tailored to fit the unemployment problem, for those communities where the unemployment problem is most serious cannot pay their share of the bill; they are—like Chicago—broke. Direct federal supervision, it is argued, would also simplify administration and reduce costs, in addition to reducing political interference. The reports of the National Resources Committee would be drawn upon heavily for the designing of projects, and the program's sponsors swear that from this source alone they can contrive a sufficient number of projects to provide genuine employment for all the permanently unemployed for years to come. They also vow that all the projects would be useful and necessary ones, yielding the nation a return on its investment in them. The statement by Maverick makes this point: "Government projects to be definitely planned to stimulate all industry and open new opportunities for Americans."

Conserving soils and developing new fertile lands will do this. Low-cost housing will do it. Cheaper power will do it. So will other projects." The statement adds as another point: "The recreation, theater, and fine-arts projects to be continued and improved with a view to developing the hidden creative talents of all groups of citizens in America and giving the benefits of these talents to all society."

Here are some of the factors that are shaping the program. Many of the 2,200,000 now employed on WPA projects are only partially employable. Private industry won't absorb them because of their age or because they have been too long away from their usual occupations. At the end of past depressions most of the men and women who were then of comparable age got their jobs back. But the length of the latest depression and the inexorable march of technological advance in industry have changed all that. By the end of 1937, the WPA estimates, approximately 1,000,000 of the men and women now employed on WPA projects will have been away from their usual, or pre-depression, occupations for five years or more. The WPA's statistics also show a definite relation between age and length of unemployment, just as the United States Employment Service's files contain data on the relationship between age and employability in private industry. A survey made of the heads of former relief families who had obtained private jobs in the spring of 1936 showed that only 27 per cent were forty-five years old or more.

Age is the greatest handicap for the unskilled in seeking to regain private employment. It decreases in importance as a handicap as skill increases, but even among the skilled workers, according to the WPA's studies, the age of fifty is the stopping point. In 1930 only 29.9 per cent of the persons gainfully occupied in this country were over forty-five. Today the proportion probably is much smaller. As of June, 1936, 38.8 per cent of the 2,256,000 men and women then working on WPA projects were over forty-five years old and 49.9 per cent were over forty. Taken together these figures do more than point the fact that a majority of those now employed under the WPA are not going to get back into private industry. They show that the remaining army of unemployed in dwindling to irreducible proportions is becoming a body of men and women made up chiefly of the unskilled and of persons who are declining in their capacity for work while still far short of pension age. They present a serious problem to the engineers in devising projects. By obliterating the means test the proposed new program would permit the engineers to fill in the gaps with younger and more skilled workers who for one reason or another have not qualified for the relief rolls or have qualified too late for WPA jobs under the present program. It is estimated that of the 1,200,000 persons on local, non-federal relief rolls, between 40 and 60 per cent are employables, and the number is being increased as families which thus far have managed to stay off relief exhaust their last resources.

A United Front on the Court

BY K. N. LLEWELLYN

THE Supreme Court issue has reached the stage where an anti-tory united front becomes necessary, moving along the only line which is immediately practicable, to wit, the President's program. It is lamentable that this should have become necessary. The President's program is unfortunate from every angle but one; it is much as if a man who needed transportation should mortgage his future for four times the price of a good car, to buy a buggy and an elephant. The choice has become, however, one between the elephant-and-buggy or no transportation at all.

The underlying issue is clear. It is not age or pressure of business. It is the attitude of justices toward allowing the government to attempt desperately needed social and economic readjustments, partly known, in greater part as yet unforeseen.

Now the Supreme Court has become, and is, the embodiment and oracle of the Constitution. What seems to escape many liberals, especially liberal constitutional lawyers, is that the court will continue to be such embodiment and oracle despite most considerable overhauling. The court's position is not dependent upon matters which

—like this one—are tiny in relation to its great tradition and function. Let us not lose perspective. The idea and ideal of the Constitution are of tremendous value to our national life. An idea and an ideal need embodiment to remain effective; but the embodiment takes on much of the sanctity of the ideal. Moreover, the court has, over the long haul, given great and statesmanlike service. Even in the more recent unfortunate decisions, its veto has forced the drafting of better and more adequate legislation.

But the court has persistently and continuously overstepped that reasonable leeway to go wrong which any oracle requires if it is to be wise. The present is again a time of need and crisis. We need action. But the majority of the court have given sign that they do not propose to let us have the action which we need, or even a reasonable part of it, or even to experiment toward salvation. Primitive peoples, in such conditions, get rid of the priest or the oracle. When rain fails persistently, they act.

The President proposes nothing so drastic. He proposes only putting enough new blood into our college of priests to overcome the inertia of the more frozen members. It



Justice McReynolds

is fairly to be expected that this will, for the moment, get results. Such results will come at an embarrassing cost. I do not indeed feel that the move will really shake the authority of the court among any persons who would not have had their respect shaken equally by a mere shift in the present alignment of the justices. For the Supreme Court is hardy as a mountain cedar; it has maintained its high position through worse storms than this, despite the prophets of calamity then and now.

What is unfortunate is the fact that as a bench increases in size, its capacity to do the work of a bench—really to consult and advise together, instead of making speeches at one another—rapidly decreases. Seven would today be a more effective working team than nine. It is not to be forgotten that the court carries a huge load of business, business worth doing well, which never gets into the public prints at all. That load will be worse handled, much worse, by fifteen. Nor is it to be forgotten that mere approval of legislation is not the task even of a liberal majority. They have before them a necessary and terrific labor, of overhauling our whole theory of constitutional law. Leave that task undone or badly done, and our children will inherit trouble. It is a task which calls for sustained and coherent group-thinking hard to work out in any bench of many members.

It troubles me less that the President's proposed action amounts to "meddling with the court." This court and others have been meddled with again and again, *without losing their independence*. Life tenure alone gives a fair assurance on that point; let alone the well-known mis-guesses of recent Presidents about their appointees; or, say, the history of New York's successive remodeling of its highest court. The most troublesome thought is that, this one measure accomplished, the reform movement may die down. We need, beyond the President's proposal, provision for a two-thirds' vote, at least, to wipe out an act of the two constitutionally *coordinate* powers. We need also an amendment expressly and unequivocally enlarging the powers of Congress—preferably under the general-welfare clause. To have such more permanent

measures as these choked off by the President's proposed poulticing of the existent evil would be tragic.

But the issue has been drawn. It has been inescapably drawn. *Lose the President's proposal* (or some substantial analogue) *and all chance for any amendment will be lost*. All men and women of any political persuasion who believe that some reform of the court is needed must rally behind this, or else get nothing. That lies plain on the face of events. I honor any who sincerely believe that the remedy proposed is worse than the disease. I honor any who see so clearly the "more" which they want that the present proposal shrinks for them into significance. I think both, however, not long-headed in the matter, but short-sighted, however great-hearted. *If* this proposal goes through, an amendment may follow. There is a chance that success may gather momentum, and go on really to cure the situation, instead of merely helping us out over the next six or eight years with a fresh-baked but perhaps stale-growing majority on the court.

It is not pleasant for one interested in adequate legal engineering to be forced into "Yes" or "No" on such a costly, inept, and equivocal line of engineering as the President has proposed. But issues are drawn by the powers that be. We cannot redraw them. If need be, we must accept even the absurd proposals for enlarging the federal judicial personnel—instead of providing existing judges with qualified legal secretaries—as an unwelcome part of the price for the one most-needed renovation of our governmental structure. The lesser evil, and so much of the needed good as can immediately be attained, lies unmistakably in supporting the President in this proposal. In supporting him—and actively. In setting up a counter-barrage of opinion and of pressure. In keeping up and increasing that counter-barrage. To be inert is to be overridden—and ridden over. We need a united front.

If we can get it, we need a better reform bill, carrying less waste and extra baggage. Until it comes out of committee, lawyers should work on the committee, to that end. But that is not the major issue. *Whatever bill comes out of committee backed by the President needs fighting support.*



Justice Stone

New Ways of Killing

BY H. C. ENGELBRECHT

IN THE next war will our young men be burned to ashes by a "death ray," shocked to fragments by sound-wave oscillations, or annihilated by the "death centrifuge"? Will there be rays to reach into the skies and destroy aircraft? Will there be flying submarines, flying tanks, aerial torpedoes, and stratosphere bombers? Will there be available an "invisible smoke" to choke aircraft engines and send them gliding down to earth? Will the soldiers wear clothes made out of glass or perhaps carry along iron cages as protection against "death rays"? And which of these methods are ready for use? Which are still in the experimental stage?

These important questions are answered by two German émigrés in an ominous volume.* The authors, one a student of politics, the other an engineer, point out that in Germany the people are being told that a number of new and frightfully destructive war engines will decide any war in Germany's favor a few days after its outbreak. These inventions are dark secrets, unknown to any other country; therefore the Germans can sleep peacefully in the certain knowledge that war holds for them neither terror nor danger of defeat. This propaganda campaign is aided by sensational notices in the world press about mysterious new armaments.

Most of this talk is nonsense. All nations are pretty well informed about new armament developments in other countries. The international arms industry is not interested in military secrets. Technical journals in all countries describe the latest scientific discoveries, patent offices record new inventions, and international patent pools make new machines available to all who will pay the royalties. Finally it must be remembered that failure to try out new war engines in maneuvers involves serious risks, and that experimentation on a large scale can never be completely secret. It is unlikely, therefore, that any nation will long be in exclusive possession of a new war machine. The various spy services make doubly sure that there is little lag between the invention and the world-wide distribution of a new killing device.

It is very unlikely, then, that Nazi Germany will pull any surprises out of its sleeve in the next war. But that is not necessary, for the known instruments, especially those developed since 1930, are terrifying enough. The only question that remains unanswered is whether the old weapons—the "improved" machine-guns, artillery, shrapnel, bombs, and such—will not prove as effective as the new ones, and much cheaper.

Great efforts have been made to adapt various kinds of rays for use in war. In the mind of the public all have been lumped together under the term "death ray." The scientific principles involved, however, and the rays em-

ployed differ widely; a dozen different rays may be used for a dozen different purposes. The most widely hailed of the rays is the one that is supposed to stop airplanes in their tracks by ruining their motors. It has been suggested that a country could surround itself with an invisible wall of these rays and make it impossible for a plane to cross this "deadline." Unfortunately, this is largely imagination. The rays can reach some low-flying planes and automobiles, where contact with the ground can be established, but their range is still very limited. Also it is simple to shield an engine against them as radio sets are now shielded. In spite of press notices that connect Marconi and Tesla with this defensive weapon, it is not yet a practical reality.

Other rays are to be used for destroying the brain, dissolving the blood, or burning up the body of enemy troops. In each case a different ray would be used. At short distances these have proved disastrous even to oxen, but they do not reach far and they can be stopped by an iron or copper cage which catches them and makes them harmless.

A lead ray which travels almost with the speed of light is also under experimentation. This "ray bullet" is still weak, and absolute protection against it is afforded by glass clothes. This does not mean that the soldiers will be inclosed in glass cages, but implies rather the use of a new textile into which glass is woven. This material is durable and washable and is already widely manufactured by the Czecho-Slovak glass industry for scarfs and mufflers of brilliant hues designed for its South American trade.

Much more practical is the direction by radio of distant craft. This technique has been fully developed for some time, and by its use aircraft, ships, and tanks can be maneuvered from a distance without the presence of a human being on board. The first attempts to experiment at sea with this method of warfare go back to 1899, and since then regular maneuvers have been held with these "ghost vessels" by all great navies. They can obey over a hundred commands, including the direction of their course, the use of searchlights, the firing of torpedoes, and so forth. Although it is unlikely that larger vessels will be handled in this way, smaller ones certainly will. They can be used to lay mines or, loaded with explosives, to crash into any desired object. Already we have the fantastic conception of an aircraft carrier with its planes carrying not a single human being. The ship is directed to any desired position and the planes take off while the directing human will is miles away, on land or on another vessel. Aircraft can be handled in similar fashion, torpedoes also. Tanks are more difficult to control by radio because they roll over uneven ground and the

* "Todesstrahlen und andere neue Kriegswaffen." By Max Seydewitz and Kurt Doberer. London: Malik Verlag. \$2.

jolting tends to put out of order the delicate guiding mechanism.

Because the guiding mechanism is not always reliable and because the target may unexpectedly change, these "ghost ships" and "ghost planes" have their limitations. The mechanism is also expensive and is almost certain to be destroyed. Several powers have decided, therefore, that it is still cheaper and more effective to use human beings. The most sensational use of human agencies in this field is to be found in the suicide squads of the Japanese and Italian navies. The Japanese method is to place a volunteer—there is apparently no dearth of candidates—inside a torpedo, where he can direct it with unflinching accuracy. The volunteer gives his life for the sake of serious damage or destruction of a war vessel with the possible death of hundreds of sailors and marines. The Italians had similar suicide squads on their mosquito fleet and the aircraft with which they threatened the British in the Ethiopian imbroglio.

An exceedingly dangerous death machine is the aerial torpedo. This is also guided from a distance. In 1922 General William Mitchell reported that he had sent three of these from Garden City, Long Island, to Trenton, New Jersey, a distance of 110 kilometers, with absolute accuracy. Since then great improvements have been made. These torpedoes may carry bombs and drop them at various intervals, or they may be bombs themselves and descend, according to direction, at strategic spots.

Still another kind of ray sets off mines and other explosives, on land or in the water. There are blinding rays, so bright that soldiers will be blinded at least temporarily as by an automobile headlight a thousand times intensified. By contrast, invisible searchlights have been developed to pick up aircraft and warships at night. The ordinary searchlight is as much a disability as an aid. In searching the skies for hostile craft, it lights up the entire region and makes a target for the enemy. The new invention uses invisible rays which can be seen only with special glasses. The American fleet used this device with great success in maneuvers off the Jersey coast in 1935.

The difficulty with all these rays is that they require some kind of power plant. A gasoline engine near the front lines is vulnerable and can be destroyed. The easiest way is to lay wires to the front where the machines are to be used. But the front changes frequently, and the wires have to be cut before a sector is abandoned. Such difficulties are overcome when the machines are operated from a fortress as defense measures. The French fortifications are well equipped with various electrical devices, and the power to operate them is readily available there.

Fantastic experiments are being carried on in the field of sound waves. It was discovered in South Africa that an invasion of grasshoppers could be repelled by the use of a siren. The sound waves of the siren made the grasshoppers flee in terror. It has been found, further, that oscillations of enormous frequency have the power to destroy. But actual destruction of living organisms has not yet been carried beyond small-scale laboratory experiments on frogs, micro-organisms, and such.

In the field of air defense some significant developments have been recorded. Until recently the outlook for warding off death from the air was dismal, indeed, but today there exist several seemingly effective means of defense. The most promising is "invisible smoke" or dust, the purpose of which is to choke aircraft engines. A gasoline engine must breathe. If the air it sucks in is clogged with metallic dust, the engine will choke and die, and the airplane will be stopped in its tracks. That is the principle of "invisible smoke." It was discovered that certain materials in dust form, possibly aluminum, remained in the air for a long period of time. These materials can be fired from anti-aircraft guns, forming a curtain of the metallic dust which will cause the breakdown of aircraft engines.

The difficulty is that this smoke will not permit defending aircraft to operate. But its use is considered so promising that counter-measures have already been taken. Germany is beginning to use the steam engine for aircraft, since this type of engine does not "breathe" and so is not susceptible to invisible smoke. Experiments with the steam engine, particularly those of an American inventor, have been very successful. The steam in the engines is cooled and returns 99 per cent of the water used for further steam. This development was thought so important by the Germans that they guarded it as closely as possible. The Poles, however, were interested, and their efforts to discover the facts led to the notorious Sosnowski affair several years ago. This Polish nobleman, operating in German society circles, ferreted out the secret of the steam airplane engine. As a result two prominent German noblewomen lost their heads. The secret, however, was out. The drawback of the steam-driven airplane is that a gasoline-motored machine can out-manuever it. On the other hand, it can spread invisible smoke itself in order to cripple the attacking gasoline craft.

Airplanes can also be stopped by so primitive a defense method as steel nets suspended from balloons. These were used in the World War by the Italians in the defense of Venice; they were a natural device for a people accustomed to snaring birds. The Austrian airmen could hardly contain their laughter over the nets, but when one after the other of their machines was caught in them, the humor faded out of the situation. It is possible to fence off a limited area with steel nets, and the British have repeatedly announced that they intend to use this means of defense.

A more ingenious anti-aircraft plan is what the German writers quoted above call "geo-mimicry," which is essentially the creation of a false landscape. Imagine a highly important industrial area with railroads, rivers, canals, factories, roads, and with open country beyond. From the air this forms a varying pattern of colors and lines. Suppose now that an air picture of this area is painted over the open country, several miles away from its actual location. The attacking aircraft would see the false landscape and drop their bombs in an open field without doing any damage. The result is achieved by laying a double smoke screen over a larger area, the top

layer being the false landscape. The British have experimented with this measure with great success.

A more deadly device is the so-called machine-gun lift or elevator. This is a very inexpensive helicopter which rises straight in the air. It contains little more than a machine cannon with a firing platform. It is useless in attack, because its horizontal movements are slow and clumsy, though its vertical moves are exceedingly fast. Because of their small cost, a large fleet of these helicopters can be assembled; they can ascend in a few minutes and meet an oncoming air attack on its own level and with superior guns.

Many other developments have occurred in aircraft construction. The Germans have taken to the Diesel engine largely because it burns oil and does not require high-test gasoline—an important consideration for countries that lack an oil supply. Stratosphere bombers have encountered the difficulties of lack of oxygen and the extreme cold of the upper regions, but experiments continue. The flying submarine—or diving airplane—can both fly and submerge. It will fly out to a hostile fleet, then fold its wings and operate like a submarine. The flying tank is a fully equipped tank which can be carried over the enemy lines. It is attached to a plane and can be dropped at any strategic point. Experiments with "parachute battalions" are also far along, especially in Russia.

The "death centrifuge" was invented by an American, sold to the British, and is now being used by the Japanese. It is nothing more than a modernization of David's sling. A large number of mechanical arms revolve at a

terrific rate while steel pellets are fed to them. The fantastic number of 33,000 rounds per minute can be fired by this machine. While not as accurate as a machine-gun, it is a devastating killing machine at close quarters. Moreover, it has the advantage of requiring neither powder nor copper.

Battles on land will also see the one-man machine-gun which the gangsters have used for some time. Armor-piercing rifles are also ready, to be used against tanks which have hitherto withstood the fire of ordinary rifles and machine-guns. In reply tanks with heavier armor have been constructed. Finally, there is the rocket torpedo, designed to rise to the stratosphere and travel enormous distances. Post-office departments have tested them in carrying mail, but so far they lack both distance and accuracy. An extremely interesting development is the propaganda aircraft—an enormous plane which carries a two-way radio set, a small printing plant, loud speakers, and similar devices. The Soviets are at present leading in this field. Such a plane will fly over enemy territory and spread propaganda.

Add poison gas, incendiary bombs, high-explosive bombs, and the killing machines well known from the last war, and the stage is set for slaughter. Since all war departments know these new weapons and are about equally ready with them, it seems certain that the next war will not be a matter of a few hours or days, no matter how sudden and unexpected the attack. Once more it will be a protracted and terribly destructive affair in which the economic power of a nation, its industry and finance, will finally be the determining factor.

The Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota

BY CHARLES R. WALKER

SOME months ago, before the election, the most diverse political weather vanes were pointing to the early formation of an American labor party which would participate decisively in the campaign of 1940. After the landslide of November 3 the talk died down abruptly. At present many observers believe that the chances for such a party are slight; others that it is impossible to predict, at this time, what will be the political alignment in the next four years of the elements which will be enlisted in any national labor party. There has been a growing confusion of aim among potential leaders and a dissipation of morale all along the line. At the same time the impulse toward political action incompatible with the economic base and aims of the two old parties will grow stronger rather than weaker, especially if the industrial organization of labor goes forward at its present pace.

During this period of indecision and watchful waiting workers, farmers, and progressives everywhere are asking what kind of labor party America will get? Will it

shield striking workers against tear gas and bayonets? What reforms are within its grasp and how far can it go? Will it bring the "ultimate cooperative commonwealth"? Finally will it be able to stem reaction, stop war, and prevent fascism? For an answer to some of these questions it seems relevant to look closely at the one example America offers of such a party in action, namely, the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota. Although its activities have been limited to a single state, it is basically comparable in my opinion to any national labor party we shall create in America, and already it has a history long enough to exhibit many of the classic features of similar parties in Europe.

The Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota has functioned actively for more than fifteen years. It has four times elected a Governor; the principal cities in the state have had Farmer-Labor Mayors; and the party has accumulated an impressive number of Senators and Congressmen in Washington. Today it is no longer a "third party" but the first party of the state. It has lately won every state

office save one and has control now of the lower house.

Today, sitting in state offices over in St. Paul, are scores of men who were flogged, tarred and feathered, and denounced as enemies of society in 1918. They were the fearless and self-sacrificing founders of the Farmer-Labor Party. In the same breath it must be said that the occupants of the state office building and the governor's chambers, though they may have been radicals in 1918, now obey certain rules of the political game that have always governed, in Minnesota or anywhere else. This leads us to fundamental questions. Can a labor party achieve its aims by adapting itself to the traditional rules of a party in power? Can it change the rules?

There can be no denying that if farmer-labor principles are ultimately to be written into statutes, the immediate business of the party becomes the winning of elections; it is a corollary that the winning candidates must largely take control of the party's destiny. In 1930, when the Minnesota party "came to power," it was quite clear to the naked eye that there had been a transfer of power from the organizers, speakers, and ideologists for the "cooperative commonwealth," who had led the movement in its earlier days, to the new "tops," the actual office-holders. In any crisis even the "purest" of the rank and file deferred to this practical control. If a ward club of the Farmer-Labor Association¹ charged betrayal of Farmer-Labor principles and threatened to bolt, the men in office held after all an irresistible whip of power. "Your criticisms are a tacit support of reaction. If you don't vote for Candidate Smith, the Republicans will win." For a Farmer-Laborite that was enough. Before the late Governor Olson died, there was a saying in Minnesota that the "pure Farmer-Laborite is a man who tells you in private that Olson should be shot and Shipstead hung, and who goes out and works like the devil to elect them both."

The problem of disciplining reformist candidates for treason to principles is troubling many practical, as well as idealistic, members of the Minnesota party. The most glaring example of both the problem and its practical effect was the case of Thomas Latimer, Farmer-Labor Mayor of Minneapolis. Elected on a campaign pledge "never to use the police against striking workers," his chief of police shot and tear-gassed hundreds of pickets in the 1935 iron workers' strike. As if to prove that this was no accident, the Mayor in person, under police protection, led a band of scabs through the picket line. Individuals protested and the trade unions went wild, but the Hennepin County Farmer-Labor Association took no action except to remonstrate with the Mayor. "If we expel him from the party," the leaders argued, "we shall lose all control over him." To which the tear-gassed strikers retorted, "What control?"

This fissure in the party between the rank and file and the office-holders has already led to an active inner struggle in Minnesota between the administration and the

association. In Farmer-Labor circles it is known as the fight between the association and the "all-partyites"—a reference to the "All-Party Committees for Olson" considered by left-wing Farmer-Laborites to be the "cause of it all." The pivotal struggle has been over patronage. Governor Olson appointed as Director of Budget and Personnel the head of his All-Party Committee, a woman and a Republican, thus surrendering to the enemy the most strategic appointive post within the gift of the party. Under protest he finally replaced her by I. C. Strout, a practical Dutchman and strong association man, who discovered that 60 per cent of the state's office personnel were Republicans or Democrats!²

Strout promptly took the position that all appointees should have the indorsement of the association through the candidate's local Farmer-Labor club. The result was a vast influx into the association of "carpetbaggers" who wanted jobs in St. Paul—the association's membership rose in a few months from 3,000 to 30,000. The solution having proved to be no solution at all, the indorsements were dropped. Since 1930 appointee after appointee with no qualifications for office other than vote-getting ability has been given an important policy-making post despite the most strenuous protests from the faithful defenders of Farmer-Labor principles and from competent office-holders who were not open to the charge of office seeking. The struggle throws light on the dual nature of a reformist party, which is pulled in one direction by its constituency of farmers and workers and forced into an opposite one by the exigencies of practical politics.

The latest Farmer-Labor convention, held in January, was marked by a series of stormy fights over charges that a prominent ex-officer had listened to a campaign contributor in the matter of appointments. A knock-down, drag-out fight also took place between the Sustaining Fund Committee and the State Committee, with charges and counter-charges of "dirty politics" flying fast. Yet although the convention turned in a sense into a family quarrel, many of the faithful for that very reason regard it as the healthiest and most heartening in the party's history. Farmer-Labor conventions have always been held before in the spring of campaign years, and the association has hitherto found neither the time nor perhaps the nerve to raise organizational issues or to attempt an inner cleansing. Although the stormy sessions emphasized that patronage and purse-strings are perennial problems of any labor party under capitalism, they also demonstrated a healthy spirit of criticism within the party.

Can patronage and all it implies ever be eliminated? The "practical politicians," of course, say that it cannot and what of it. It is an apparent but not real paradox that many of the Marxist revolutionists in Minnesota agree that the practical politicians understand the basic character of the Farmer-Labor Party far better than their earnest critics within or without the party. The revolutionists concentrate criticism not on the political oppor-

¹ The Farmer-Labor Association is the permanent membership organization of the Farmer-Labor movement. It is composed of a dues-paying membership organized into ward, village, or township clubs, trade unions, affiliated and paying dues on a per capita basis, and farm organizations. The Farmer-Labor Party is the legal and technical name used on the ballot.

² When a Republican legislature in a burst of partisan zeal voted an investigation of graft among state office employees, the investigation yielded surprisingly small fruits. Disillusioned Farmer-Laborites suggested that the reason was that the Republican probers found themselves investigating only Republican office-holders.

tunism of particular Farmer-Laborites but on the inevitably opportunistic nature of any such party. It is their contention that a Farmer-Laborite who believes the party can be fundamentally different belongs in one of the parties which propose to change the rules by revolution and play the whole game differently.

In most discussions of farmer-labor parties radicals emphasize that they mean a "real" farmer-labor party, not a makeshift like the one in Minnesota, run by politicians who compromise its principles. Yet Minnesota's specimen is actually as "real" as any national labor party we are likely to see. Although it now has a large middle-class following, it was born of a solid alliance between trade unions and the most militant farmers' organization of the day, the Non-Partisan League. The trade unions are affiliated, pay per capita dues, and have delegates on the county committees, which, incidentally, show a much more proletarian character than the top committees. Nor can one question the sincerity or courage of its founders, who were subjected to all the persecutions of war hysteria. Any subsequent loss of control by the base over the top is not, as the aspiring architects of a "real farmer-labor party" believe, an "avoidable mistake." On the contrary it is the inherent fate of a party which must submit to compromise with the system under which it lives.

Does all this imply that the party in Minnesota is "just like the two old parties"? By no means. Its all-important distinction from the two old capitalist parties is that it looks for major support to the workers and farmers and their organizations. Senator Lundeen in his official party history maintains that more important than any legislative achievements of the party is its support of workers and farmers and their right to organize. "It is probable," he remarks, "that more farms have been saved through the efforts of such an organization as the Farmers' Holiday Association than were saved by the mortgage-moratorium law." Governor Olson time and again used the pressure of these economic groups to achieve results with a recalcitrant legislature, and the trade unions and farmer organizations with equal effectiveness brought pressure on him. To put it sharply, a delegation of organized truck drivers or dirt farmers on whom the party depends for votes can force the hand of a Farmer-Labor Governor—up to a point. But contrariwise, on every basic issue the party in power, Farmer-Labor or another, unless it is ready to substitute a new economic system, must see to it that the old one works somehow. Examine any concrete Farmer-Labor reform and the dilemma presents itself. When a mortgage-moratorium law was passed in Minnesota, left-wingers pointed out that it was not a genuine moratorium. They were right. A genuine moratorium on farm mortgages would not only have prevented future loans to farmers but have wrecked the financial structure of savings banks and insurance companies. Such a law if carried out could only bring collapse and chaos—unless the party taking such a step were prepared to go beyond it to a revolutionary change in property relations.

The most dramatic manifestations of the dual nature

of a farmer-labor party appear in social crises. In the middle of the general drivers' strike in 1934 the Farmer-Labor Governor raided strike headquarters with national guardsmen and jailed the strike leaders. Three days later he raided the offices of the Citizens' Alliance, the Minneapolis employers' association. Governor Olson, against the protests of the strike leaders, declared martial law, assuring working-class supporters that by so doing he could force a favorable settlement. What happened? In his role of "arbiter" and in order to move "necessities," he allowed 11,500 trucks to move under military permit, and forbade all picketing. The strike ebbed. Only by forcing their Farmer-Labor Governor to rescind permits, and only by picketing against his orders and in the face of the bayonets of his militia, was the strike won. Was there then any advantage for the truck drivers in having a Farmer-Labor government in office? Certainly. Had the Governor—who was also commander-in-chief of the state's troops—been a reactionary, working-class pressure upon him would doubtless have been futile. Instead of tolerating—up to a point—militant picketing in the face of martial law, he would literally have "shot the strike to pieces." The political lesson is a simple one. Whether a farmer-labor administration is an asset or a liability or worse depends on the strength and the untiring political vigilance of its working-class base.

Take the Minneapolis strikes of 1936. Last October there was a city-wide truck strike against the wholesale grocers. Paralleling it came a general strike in the flour mills. Employers demanded of Governor Peterson (Farmer-Labor) that he call the National Guard. Employers demanded of Mayor Latimer (Farmer-Labor) that he use the police against pickets. (As we have seen, he had obliged them once before.) But as fast as the employers walked out of the Governor's and Mayor's offices, delegations of strike leaders walked in. They asked with proletarian directness which side the Mayor and Governor were on. They reminded both that it was an election year. The police under Mayor Latimer did no shooting. Martial law—under Governor Peterson—was never declared. Both strikes were won.

Two months before he died I interviewed the late Farmer-Labor Governor Floyd B. Olson on his part in the 1934 strikes. "The strike leaders of Local 574 assure me that your use of the militia tended to break their strike," I said. "On the other hand the employers of Minneapolis tell me that the National Guard was used *against* them and won the strike for the truck drivers. You called in the militia. Who was right?"

The Governor hesitated for a moment. Then he smiled. "Both were right," he said.

A labor party can under some circumstances be a valuable engine to advance the interest of the working class. But only if there are left militant trade unions within it whose leaders are prepared to tell the party, not once but on all occasions, and with pickets if necessary, that both sides can't be right.

[In his second article, to appear shortly, Mr. Walker describes at length his interview with Floyd B. Olson during the Governor's last illness.]

Women Workers in Nazi Germany

BY JUDITH GRUNFELD

WHEN Hitler proclaimed *Kinder, Kirche, Küche* — children, church, kitchen — to be the holy trinity, at once the mission and the salvation, of German women, many unemployed men saw in it a promise of jobs as soon as women workers had been transported to the permanent security of a home, and many women, employed and unemployed, saw in it a promise of wages to the male breadwinner sufficient to insure this permanent and desirable security.

Having thrown the female deputies out of the Reichstag, Hitler had no difficulty in passing laws making women Class B subjects. The law of June 1, 1933, stated frankly the intention to relieve unemployment by eliminating women workers. Since the trade unions had been replaced by company unions under government control, there could be no opposition from that source.

"Women today," wrote Irmgard Reichenau, a Nazi woman journalist, "are handed over defenseless to the men, who hold the entire power of the state in their hands."

What are the results of this crusade? How many women workers did the *Führer* send home? After four years of Nazi rule, just how secure is the German home; how secure are women and children?

According to statistics of the German Department of Labor, there were in June, 1936, 5,470,000 employed women, or 1,200,000 more than in January, 1933, when Hitler came to power. Not less than 31 per cent of all employed Germans are now women—a higher percentage than obtains in the United States, Great Britain, or France. Moreover, almost all available female workers in Germany—to be exact, 96.6 per cent—were employed in June, 1936, while the corresponding figure for male wage-earners was 92.2 per cent, again according to the data of the Department of Labor. In a word, greater unemployment exists among men than among women.

The vigorous campaign against the employment of women has not led to their increased domesticity and security, but has been effective in squeezing them out of the better-paid positions into the sweated trades (*Hausindustrien*). Needless to say, this type of labor, with its miserable wages and long hours, is extremely dangerous to the health of women and degrades the family. Discrimination against women labor has made it increasingly cheaper and stimulated the demand for women in all trades. This in turn has forced down the wage level of male employees. As a result men do not earn enough to support a family, and women are compelled to work. So the vicious circle of fascist policy is completed.

What do official pay rolls tell of the Nazi promise that bearers of Nazi children should "enjoy a woman's life"? The official inquiry into wages in fifteen industries made in March, 1936, during Hitler's "prosperity," by the

German Board of Statistics shows the amazing discrepancy between male and female wages and the very low level of the latter. Similar inquiries carried out by the Board of Statistics in 1931 and 1932, during the worst depression years, show far higher wage rates. The discrepancy between male and female wages is best shown by the following typical examples of average hourly earnings, including piece work, in different industries:

In the chemical industry the average hourly earnings of semi-skilled and unskilled women are 41.3 per cent lower than those of semi-skilled and unskilled men, the figures being 87.5 and 51.5 pfennigs.

In the metal industry, including electrical engineering and the production of precision and optical instruments, watches, and telephone and radio equipment, where female workers have proved more efficient than men in many processes, the average hourly earnings of female operators are 41 per cent lower than those of men.

In the clothing industry the hourly earnings of skilled and semi-skilled women are 42.6 per cent less than those of skilled and semi-skilled men.

In the textile industry, where more women than men are employed, the wage level is particularly low for both. Skilled men get an average hourly rate of 69.2 pfennigs, skilled women 49.5; unskilled men earn 53.6 pfennigs, unskilled women only 37.7, or 15 cents an hour.

In the paper industry the hourly earnings of skilled women are 42.8 per cent less than those of skilled men.

In bread, pastry, and candy factories skilled women earn 41 per cent less than skilled men.

In the typographical trades the hourly earnings of female "technical employees" are 48.4 per cent lower than those of male "technical employees," the rates being 98.8 and 50.7 pfennigs.

How does the fascist exploitation of women workers affect the occupational trend? The following comparative statistics of the demand for and the supply of labor at the beginning of June, 1936, are enlightening:

VACANCIES PER 100 APPLICANTS OF SAME SEX*

Industry	For Men	For Women
Chemical	3	15
Textile	0.25	2
Clothing	1.2	7.3
In all industries.....	5.9	17.7

Even the absolute figures of demand were higher for women than for men in the chemical, textile, and clothing industries as well as in the commercial fields, while the supply of male employees was, of course, many times greater. The more women's wages dropped, the easier it was for them to find work.

* The percentages in this table are calculated from the absolute figures published by the Department of Labor on August 5, 1936.

What do women earn weekly, and how high can their standard of living be? First we must take into consideration the various wage deductions imposed by the authorities. The official inquiry into wages rates these at 12.4 per cent in the chemical industry and 14.3 per cent in the metal industry. Unofficial sources put them at 15 to 25 per cent. If we calculate the net wages on the basis of the official figure for deductions, we find that for a 45-hour week in a chemical plant women get the equivalent of \$7.90 weekly at the current rate of exchange.

The average net earnings of female operators in the metal industry for a 48.8-hour week are as "high" as \$8 for time and piece work. In the paper industry even skilled women get for a 45-hour week a net wage of 20.5 marks, or \$8.20; the unskilled earn, in the same time, a net wage of \$6.30. In the textile industry skilled women—spinners and weavers—get for a 40-hour week a net wage of about \$7; unskilled workers, \$5.30.

So much for the "enjoyment of a woman's life" in the Third Reich. What of the happy security of the home that filled the *Führer's* speeches in the campaign of 1932? It has given way to Dr. Goebbels's slogan, "Guns are more important than butter." The increasing shortage of food and the real wages of workers give the picture. The net average weekly wage of the German worker is \$11 to \$12, according to official figures. The woman worker earns from \$6 to \$8. What such wages mean in terms of purchasing power is easy to calculate on the basis of the following table of current prices in Germany and their American equivalents, wired to the New York *Times* by its correspondent in Berlin in December.

	Price per Pound	
	Berlin	New York
Sirloin steak	72 cents	38 cents
Cheap beef cuts.....	43-54 "	29-34 "
Pork	43-65 "	21-28 "
Veal	65-80 "	18-50 "
Butter	58 "	39 "
Margarine	32-40 "	20-24 "
Lard	36-43 "	16-24 "

"That means," the correspondent adds, "that the majority live on bread, potatoes, cabbage, the cheapest margarine—made mainly of whale oil—and cheap sausages, which often include horse meat. German housewives are often forced to stand in line for hours or run around to various shops in order to get anything at all. Good eggs and cream for coffee are becoming rarities. Butter is rationed to 80 per cent of October consumption and even that, like any other kind of fat, is available only after registration with the dairy shop."

Continually increasing living costs coupled with rigorous wage reductions to below the depression level of 1932 are the real achievement of fascist "prosperity." And there is no hope of improvement. "I cannot promise today, or at any period, higher wages," Field Marshal von Blomberg told representatives of the workers in armament factories on February 23, and he stressed that "the life and work of the Labor Front must be carried on according to military ideas."

The earnings of women in Germany are now cut down to the wage level of the Far East. There is no doubt that the current low wages tend to increase dumping. Hitler's wage policy, therefore, is threatening the standard of living of workers in other countries.

The women of Germany have been granted a further fascist gift—compulsory labor service. The law of June 26, 1935, states the obligation "of all the German youth of both sexes to serve their people by doing useful work but not as wage-earners," that is, without payment. For this purpose and to promote the education of German youth "in the spirit of National Socialism" Hitler has, according to the law, the right to mobilize annually as many boys and girls between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five as he likes and for as long a time as he likes. People engaged in labor service are not allowed to marry unless they obtain the permission of the authorities. Women are subject to another law defining when, how, where, and by whom they may be made sterile in the Third Reich. By decree of July 28, 1936, the Secretary of Labor legalized sterilization by means of irradiation. His list of 150 physicians authorized to perform this service included no women.

The Department of Labor published recently data to show that there are available in Germany a total of 13.2 million male workers while 17.6 million persons were employed on June, 1936. Thus even if all the men workers were employed, Germany would need at least 4.4 million female workers. Actually 5.47 million women are employed. Moreover, if Hitler were actually to eliminate female workers, Germany could neither produce commodities for export nor rearm.

Cultural progress tends to eliminate hard work for women and to facilitate their ascent to higher professions. Fascism reverses this process. Prominent Nazi women have expressed quite clearly in the name of "gifted women" their uneasiness about being made the victims of the dictatorship they fought to establish. Some of them have even dared, in an appeal to Hitler, to point out that German women were better off before the dictatorship, and that "China, Japan, and Turkey are far more advanced today in regard to the position of women than we are, and not to their loss." On page 22 of this historical appeal we read also: "Men have led the world to an abyss, and the danger still continues if one-sided rule by men is set up." In another expression of this bitter after-realization Dr. Leonor Kühn says on page 34 of the same pamphlet that "thinking National Socialist women begin to regret that in their national feeling they raised men to be unrestricted masters of the destiny of women and of the nation." These and many similar statements have not, of course, diminished the compulsory leisure of "gifted" Nazi women. Now they keep silent, but their S.O.S. to the *Führer* is worthy of note by women in democratic countries, if only to warn them of the tragic fate of women workers in fascist Germany. Deprived of all democratic rights, of all opportunities to promote peace, women are compelled to serve Hitler's militarism, which is already causing workers' families to suffer war-time privations.

Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

Haiti, 1937—II

THE modern Caribbean dictator has discovered a new technique for maintaining himself in power—having an efficient army and seeing to it that only the soldiers possess arms. But thereby he places the fortunes of his country in the hands of the military men. I met two of the three ranking colonels of the Haitian army and was profoundly impressed by them. Colonel André, handsome and able, assured me that politics meant nothing to him and that the army would have nothing to do with politics. But the army is certainly in politics to the extent that it supervises and controls the elections. Some day it may decide that it wants another ruler, or that the ballot boxes shall be filled otherwise than the President directs. There is no earthly reason for Haiti to have a standing army or for that army to be intrusted with policing the country. What the country needs is a mounted constabulary of the type of the famous Canadian "mounties." A force of this type of a thousand men would be sufficient to preserve order and prevent revolution. And the money thus saved could well be used by this pitifully poor country. But here as elsewhere the army cries for and gets more and more men and money, the excuse being that Santo Domingo has more troops and that there is much smuggling over the border. Because Santo Domingo has a few airplanes and three batteries of artillery constant pressure is brought to bear upon the American Fiscal Representative to loosen the purse-strings and let the Haitian army have more unnecessary military toys.

The Fiscal Representative, in the person of Seymour de la Rue, is a great thorn in the flesh of the Haitians—and not wholly without reason. Especially since they have purchased the National City Bank and made it the National Bank of Haiti the people feel that their finances should be entirely in their own hands, and they are eagerly—but vainly—hoping for a new refunding loan to enable them to pay off their debt and so terminate Mr. de la Rue's control. They do not deny that he has helped them a great deal, that he is aware of the economic needs of the country and recognizes the necessity of changing Haiti from a one-crop country to a three- or four-crop country. They do protest against the banana contract which Mr. de la Rue was instrumental in obtaining in the belief that it represented a great step forward for Haiti. They deny that it is advantageous—I mean Haitians outside official circles—and they particularly dislike being tied up with one of the two American banana trusts.

The answer, unfortunately, is that if Haiti did not tie up with one of these trusts it simply could not dispose of a large banana crop in the United States. Formerly banana

growers, who were few in number, got as high as a dollar a stem for their bananas from sporadic purchasers able to handle the small crop. Now they get a minimum of 32 cents from the Standard Fruit Company, which advances money to the farmers for clearing and planting the land and for living expenses until they can draw money from their first crop; and this must slowly be repaid out of the 32 cents. The company also provides irrigation and has to do an enormous amount of clerical and bookkeeping work. It is hoped that within three or four years Haiti will be selling 4,000,000 stems of bananas to the outside world. There is one thing that can be said in favor of the contract. It preserves the system of small peasant farms and does not open a way to the company's purchase of great stretches of land as in other Caribbean islands.

If President Vincent had the money, I believe that he would rapidly advance his country. The resident Americans all speak well of him, especially the business men. The public order is today all that could be asked—indeed, it is far superior, because of the admirable character of the Haitian people, to that in the United States. Among 3,000,000 uneducated people there are not thirty serious crimes in an entire year! There are petty larcenies, of course, in multitude, as always in a country in which so large a proportion of the people live on the edge of starvation. But it is a proud boast of the Haitians that a white woman, or a black one, can go alone through the country and can count upon meeting only courtesy and consideration at the hands of the peasants. The people are industrious and hard-working to a degree, patient and long-suffering, content with their little all. They are magnificent material out of which to make a supremely happy country, without the slightest threat of war or international embroilments. If M. Vincent lives up to the opportunity which is his, he will immediately turn Haiti back into the paths of democracy, for if ever a people deserved the confidence of their ruler, the Haitians do.

Finally, a personal word. Never have I been received with greater kindness, friendliness, and good-will, or with such generous hospitality, as was extended to me by President Vincent and other officials of the republic. It was, of course, not personal but a most gratifying recognition of what *The Nation* did for Haiti years ago—especially of the work of Ernest Gruening, Lewis S. Gannett, Arthur Warner, Herbert Seligman, Freda Kirchwey, and others of *The Nation's* editors and contributors. Such an experience is so rare in an editor's life in the United States, where no one has time to remember, that I gratefully record it.

[The first part of Mr. Villard's report on Haiti appeared last week.]

BROUN'S PAGE

John L. Lewis & Co.

THERE'S no particular need to argue just now that the C. I. O. has made extraordinary progress under the leadership of John L. Lewis, but I think it may be worth while to go over some old ground. It seems to me that in the light of present events some past decisions of Lewis show up better than they did at the time. There was a disposition to criticize him for what was called "splitting the labor movement." Some who didn't care at all for Green were still rather sharp in their comments about the president of the United Mine Workers.

Their argument ran that Lewis should make his fight from within the A. F. of L. and keep at least an approximation of peace until such time as he could capture leadership. These critics even said that Lewis was working to bring about a split rather than to prevent one. Possibly that was his intention. If so, it proved a wise decision. If peace had been patched up with the leaders of the craft crowd, the victories in steel and motors would have been wholly impossible. It was necessary for Lewis to get all his foes in front of him. It would have been fatal to run the risk of being stabbed from behind, and the craft crowd would have done just that.

I think this accounts for what some took to be mere truculence in the words and manner of Lewis in his dealings with Green. He did lay it on pretty thick, but I believe it was all done for a definite purpose. By the time the General Motors strike began, Green had been definitely pegged as a man with a bitter feud against Lewis and the whole C. I. O. movement. His position was so plain that nobody paid much attention to the strike-breaking statements which he issued during the conflict. They were discounted as the words of a defeated and disappointed man. Even the newspaper editors who were on the prowl for ammunition to use against Lewis couldn't get very far with Green's dud shrapnel.

I also think that Lewis was correct in not going to Tampa or anywhere near it during the A. F. of L. convention, although I did not think so at the time. Obviously the prime necessity was to let the workers in steel and motors know that organization would be carried on by the C. I. O. and that under no possible compromise would any of the agents of Green be allowed to participate. There are men in the steel industry who have long memories, and to them an old-line A. F. of L. organizer is just about as popular as a company spy.

Up to now the vigor which Lewis put into the campaign to reelect Roosevelt has been entirely justified. It seems to me that the criticism of that course which came from some of the radicals was wholly mistaken. In *The Nation's* own pages Paul Ward once wrote during the campaign that the only difference between Landon and

Roosevelt as far as labor was concerned was the fact that Landon would call out the troops in the first week of a strike and Roosevelt in the second. I did not think much of this particular piece of bravura cynicism at the time and I think less of it now. The victory in Flint could hardly have been won if Landon had been in the White House. Governor Murphy was useful to the C. I. O., and I don't think there is much doubt that the Governor took his tone from the President.

It may be that a break will come between Roosevelt and Lewis. At the very least it ought to be long delayed. Labor needs the cooperation of Mr. Roosevelt, and his legislative program can only be made to function through the support of a large-scale trade-union movement. Indeed, I'm beginning to wonder whether the one sharp exchange between the President and the labor leader may not have been just a bit of play acting.

John L. Lewis has been too busy to waste time in answering some of the absurd things which have been said about him in the newspapers. The picture of a man gone mad with lust for power now seems pretty funny. It is obvious that all the moves were planned carefully in advance and that sufficient slack was left to take up those situations in which compromise would be necessary.

But there is one respect in which I think that the prevalent journalistic practice may actually do harm to Lewis and the cause of the C. I. O. The practice which I have in mind is probably without sinister intent. That's why it is dangerous. The fallacy creeps up and lodges itself in the community mind. I am thinking of the way in which the drive for industrial unionism has been made to seem a one-man show. Naturally the headline writer seizes upon the name of Lewis. It is only five letters, and according to the way we used to count on the *Tribune* copy desk the extra length of the *w* is neutralized by the *i*. So it has been Lewis in the headlines and pretty much Lewis all through the news reports.

That is characteristic enough of American newspaper modes. When a football back runs sixty-five yards and across the goal line, it is customary to say that he scored the touchdown. There is neither room nor disposition to go much into the matter of the interference which made his run possible. Papers are geared to handle only one star at a time. Still it is naive and worse than that for people to get the impression that John L. Lewis personally went out and buttonholed every new recruit for the C. I. O. To be sure the labors which he accomplished on his own were prodigious, but a large part of his labor went into the building of an effective machine. The movement for industrial unionism certainly needs Lewis, and he in turn needs the support of the many thousands who have cooperated with him closely. The proper billing ought to be John L. Lewis and Company.

HEYWOOD BROUN

BOOKS *and the* ARTS

AS IT WERE BEYOND THE WORLD

BY MARK VAN DOREN

DURING the fourteen years since Doughty's "Arabia Deserta" first appeared in America it has been possible to learn a few things about its author which would place the book in the long mystery of his life. A memoir by D. G. Hogarth¹ and a critical essay by Barker Fairley² have made it clear, for instance, that "Arabia Deserta" was only an episode in Doughty's literary and spiritual career; that it was indeed something of an accident. It certainly cannot be numbered among those classics which have been tossed off by their authors without a side-glance at fame and with no consciousness of artistry; it took nine years to write, and when the Cambridge University Press proposed a simplification of its style for the first edition of 1888 Doughty replied: "I would prefer that the book be not published than change one word of my English. I value my style much more than my matter."

Yet it was tangential to a career as English poet that Doughty had planned for himself from the beginning. Ancient and weary as the author of "Arabia Deserta" sounds to any reader, he was in his middle thirties when he had the experience of which he wrote in this vast and difficult book; he was only forty-five when it was first published; and he had almost another forty years in which to live obscurely in England composing the twelve volumes of poetry, including an epic in six volumes, by which he believed his name would live. It is well for a reader of the newest edition of "Arabia Deserta"³ to remember all this, for it helps to explain a certain quality of interest which Doughty has in his subject, and hence helps to explain his book.

The Arabs, in other words, were not central to that study of man which an erudite and dedicated poet had set for himself from the days of his youth when he was rejected for the British navy because of a delicate constitution and when he resolved to "soar above the vanities of this world and take a place among the worthies who have lived for its adornment and the real glory of God." If any people was central it was his own—the British race, so unconscious in these diluted times of the pure stream which once had expressed the flowing of its spirit. His deepest desire was to return along this stream to its source; and if the journey took him over the world, tracing the tributaries which had entered from Rome and the East, he went without complaining, insatiable for further knowledge concerning "the Story of the Earth, Her manifold living creatures, the human generations and Her an-

cient rocks." It was thus, as a wandering scholar, a geologist and a geographer, that he strayed to Arabia in 1876 and heard of some inscriptions at Medáin Sâlih which no European had ever copied. It was the inscriptions that drew him down from Damascus with a pilgrim train bound for Mecca; but it was something else, when the caravan returned and would have taken him to Damascus again, that kept him, a lone and somewhat fragile Englishman, wandering for nineteen months "through the most of that vast mountainous labyrinthine solitude of rainless valleys" and on across sandy immensities where he daily risked his life among fanatical nomad Arabs—"tent-dwellers, inhabiting, from the beginning, as it were beyond the World."

The Arabs were an ancient people. But not only that. They were unchanged from what they had been, there was a taint of eternity in their daily doings, they endured somewhat as rocks and sand endure, without sense of self or knowledge of time. This must have been what kept Doughty among them so long in spite of a certain contempt he had for them and in spite of the terrible nature of their land. He maintained his English identity throughout; he never went native; he did not forget how much he had to learn from people who were unlike anything he could ever be and who yet were in almost the literal sense contemporaries of his own people two millennia ago. He lived among them, and later on he wrote of living among them, in a kind of double time—now, this moment, and forever; both as if his presence there mattered and as if it mattered no more than a grain of sand upon the desert. Perhaps Doughty lost his footing between the two extremes of consciousness and fell beyond recovery. An English relation remembers that when he came home in 1879 "he spoke seldom . . . and with some hesitation, as if his native language did not come quite easily to him." He himself would have said that his native language, then as always, was not the language of Victorian England but the sweet, strong tongue of Chaucer and Spenser—which it was his duty to restore as it was his duty to remind Englishmen of their human heritage. But the cousin may have been right. The difficulty of reading Doughty is the difficulty of listening to a man who inhabits two worlds at once, one of them as old as granite and the other as new as a puff of passing wind that bears odors of apples if it be an English wind or of camels and butter if it be Arabian.

Whatever the genesis of "Arabia Deserta," and whatever its relation to the epic in six volumes, "The Dawn in Britain" (1906), whose composition it so long de-

¹ "The Life of Charles M. Doughty," Doubleday, Doran and Company. 1929.

² "Charles M. Doughty," Oxford University Press. 1927.

³ "Travels in Arabia Deserta." By Charles M. Doughty. With an Introduction by T. E. Lawrence. Random House. Two Volumes. \$15.

laid, it remains an indescribable book in the same way that Arabia or any other country in its wholeness remains indescribable. "Doughty's completeness," says Colonel Lawrence in the famous Introduction of 1920 now printed again, "is devastating." But there is more than Arabia in the book. There is Doughty in Arabia—the entirety of his experience, step by step and pain by pain, rendered with an impersonal, an indeed awful accuracy. Its twelve hundred pages move as slowly as Doughty moved, and through as thick an atmosphere of alien monotony. There is none of the lightness and picturesqueness of a travel book; nor shall we flatter ourselves that we know much about the author when we are through. For it is not about himself that he has been talking; or, as I have hinted, about the Arabia that anyone can see from a camel's back. It is rather about that incredible peninsula where the past and present live on together, and where one may learn things not taught in books, not even in this one. The newborn camel by its dam, the reek of butter and coffee and sweat, the pleasant coolness of sudden evening, the whispering of the wives, the oaths and prayers of the Bedouins, the unendurable heat of mid-day, the stretching of volcanic ridges beyond the limits of any weary eye, the fouled spring, the wind over the sand—these and ten thousand other things had for Doughty a unique importance which they can have for the reader too if he takes them as they are given to him, slowly, patiently, and one by one.

Girl at the Play

BY MURIEL RUKEYSER

Long after you beat down the powerful hand
And leave the scene, prison's still there to break.
Brutalized by escape, you travel out to sit
In empty theaters, your stunned breast, hardened neck
Waiting for warmth to venture back.

Gilded above the stage, staring archaic shapes
Hang, like those men you learn submission from
Whose majesty sits yellow on the night,
Young indolent girls, long-handed, one's vague mouth
And cruel nose and jaw and throat.

Waiting's paralysis strikes, king-cobra hooded head's
Infected fangs petrify body and face,
Emblems fade everyway, dissolving even
The bitter infantile boys who call for sleep's
Winy breasts whose nipples are long grapes.

Seats fill. The curtain's up where strong lights act,
Cut theater to its theme; the quick fit's past.
Here's answer in masses moving; by light elect,
They turn the stage before into the street behind,
And nothing's so forgotten as your blind
Female paralysis that takes the mind,
And nothing's so forgotten as your dead
Fever, now that it's past and the swift play's
ahead.

BOOKS

Three of a Kind

ANOTHER SUCH VICTORY. By Clifton Cuthbert. Hillman Curl. \$2.50.

THIS IS YOUR DAY. By Edward Newhouse. Lee Furman. \$2.50.

BETWEEN THE HAMMER AND THE ANVIL. By Edwin Seaver. Julian Messner. \$2.50.

AN EARLIER novel by Clifton Cuthbert, "Thunder Without Rain," contained a few passages that were genuinely tender and pathetic. The theme of the novel, incest, was handled courageously and with an attempt to treat so-called abnormality in a spirit of sympathetic understanding. But the book was ruined by an annoyingly precious style. Characters, motivations, background were all entangled and lost in a web of vague if mellifluous metaphors, and for a dénouement the author was content to resort to impossible melodrama. "Another Such Victory" is startlingly different from its predecessor. It is a straightforward account of a strike in a small New England textile town in 1934. The author contrasts the lives of the owning and working classes and unfolds the meanings of the strike for members of each class. His novel is sincere and earnest, decidedly better reading than, say, Steinbeck's "In Dubious Battle" which was merely a revolutionary Rover Boy story. However, Cuthbert's perceptions are obvious and familiar and his characters are superficially drawn, especially the leisure-class young man who thinks that he is falling in love with a striker, and the Communist Party members, who are presented as somewhat irresolute and bewildered. Apparently Cuthbert, in his anxiety to forestall the criticisms usually leveled against stereotyped proletarian novels, has turned the pattern upside down, and substituted defeat for victory.

I think that Edward Newhouse's first novel, "You Can't Sleep Here," was overrated by most critics. It was the story of a newspaperman in a New York Hooverville, and nearly all the characters talked Hemingway. The book was glib and slapdash, careless in its style, facile rather than understanding in its characterizations. It had a kind of surface urban brightness, and little else. "This Is Your Day" is a decidedly more ambitious effort. It moves on from Hooverville to a young party worker trying to organize in a farm area. As a counter-plot there is the story of a young careerist high-school teacher who is feebly trying to pay ideological conscience money to the revolution with counterfeit coins. He becomes involved in an affair with one of his students and is required to marry her against his will. This part of the novel is handled competently, but it does not begin to squeeze the potentialities out of such a situation. Newhouse strives for precision and accuracy of detail. He seems to have read Proust since writing his first novel, and Proust is welded to Hemingway as an influence. To his facile conversation, he attempts to add analysis, but he shows no capacity to animate his characters on paper. The same mannerisms that marred the first book are noticeable here, but not to the same degree. Dialogue that is intended to be clever and "snappy" is often in bad taste. Newhouse's treatment of Communists, however, is decidedly more satisfactory than that of either Cuthbert or Seaver. The best that can be said of the book is that it is readable; indeed, I

believe that Newhouse would make a much better columnist than novelist.

Edwin Seaver's first novel, "The Company," followed Nathan Asch's "The Office," and both books anticipated many of the tendencies now clearly revealed in the work of younger left-wing novelists. "The Company" was a neat and consistent, if minor, novel. It registered one note, pathos, and this note was excellently sustained. However, Seaver's latest effort, "Between the Hammer and the Anvil," indicates that his promise exceeded his fulfilment. Using the same form—a series of short sketches—he strives to enlarge his theme, his meanings, and his canvas, and also he seeks to recruit members to the Communist Party. He presents a wide variety of characters, most of them intellectuals and white-collar workers and victims of the depression. The book is intellectually pretentious. It combines artiness of style and tabloid wisecracks in a literal miscegenation. What Seaver lacks essentially is a sense of craftsmanship. Again and again, when he seems to be getting into a sketch, he intrudes stylized phrases, patches of dialogue that are inappropriate, auctorial platitudes, or obvious and overstated implications. He pads his book with florid metaphors; yet despite its length and intended canvas it is meager in its details and superficial in its motivation. In the concluding sketch a writer preparing to join the party experiences a revolutionary vision. The writing slips into such bathos as the following: "Did the weather too partake of the class struggle? Heyward's [a character who is a party member] irony went deeper than jest. If one saw one's life, all life, from a central vantage point . . ." At one place in the story some youths in an automobile look flirtatiously at a girl passing in a taxicab and she smiles back. We get this: "The taxi cab lunged ahead precipitately, leaving in its wake the fragrant stench of girlsmile and ethylgas." I quote these two passages because they reveal the level of insight and writing in the novel as a whole. "Between the Hammer and the Anvil" is commonplace, a mélange of derivations, and a severe disappointment. Seaver, after aligning himself with the Communist movement, has retrogressed as a craftsman and stuffed his mind with platitudes.

JAMES T. FARRELL

Bankrupt Realism

PERSONAL REALISM. By James Bissett Pratt. The Macmillan Company. \$3.

THERE are numerous indications that the various schools of philosophic realism which have flourished in America for the last thirty years are, each in its own way, facing bankruptcy. And this condition is not to be traced only to the inability of these philosophies to furnish us, in terms of their own assumptions, a consistent picture of the world. One should not lose faith in the ability of the human mind to make almost any view seem plausible and coherent so long as social conditions make it pertinent. On the other hand, one should not forget that when a philosophic system ceases to be pertinent to the perplexities and anxieties of an age, all its technical excellences are not enough to save it.

The book under review has suggested these obvious considerations. Granting Mr. Pratt's fundamental assumptions and the decidedly mystic bent of his mind, competent critics would no doubt think highly of his views. His book is the product of a seasoned and well-equipped mind. The basic difficulty does not lie in its internal structure but in its assumptions. For it is these that enable Mr. Pratt to draw from his realism a spiritualistic metaphysic which seems quite

irrelevant to our contemporary world. And those who have thought of realism as a bracing wind which thirty years ago blew away the fogs of idealism must deem the uses to which Mr. Pratt puts it a betrayal and a "liquidation." For here is realism used to establish an utterly vaporous and transcendental conception of the self and a still more vaporous "spiritual pantheism," made possible by accepting mystical experience as possessing "genuinely cosmic significance" while insisting on the exclusive validity of an empirical method which is seldom really adhered to.

Technically considered, the fundamental difficulty with the whole system—from the standpoint of contemporary naturalism and not of the naturalism of the nineteenth century—lies not in its failure to assert the existence of an external world and the ability of minds to know it but in its failure to see that before a dualism such as is here presented can be entertained, one has to dispose seriously of the efforts which are being made to show how mind springs from and is of nature. In America, Dewey and Mead are the recognized leaders of these efforts. And it is their naturalism, and not that of the nineteenth century, that must be reckoned with. Mr. Pratt, while devoting pages upon pages to an effort to bury the ghosts of nineteenth-century materialism, disposes of Dewey and Mead in a few lines and a footnote respectively.

The result of Mr. Pratt's failure to take up the challenge of these men is that he never examines in any serious sense the basis of the dualist position from which he starts. This means that he never surrenders the assumptions which realism at the turn of the century was forged to challenge. But since dualism cannot help making of either world or mind or both a mystery, it is no wonder that Mr. Pratt arrives at the religiously satisfying but unscientific conclusions indicated above.

Note, however, that the objections to Mr. Pratt's position are not only of a theoretical but also of a practical order. For if matter and spirit, nature and self are held to be radically different substances, it becomes impossible not only to explain how values arise but to show how these values, from whatever source obtained, can be made effective instrumentalities for changing the material grounds of society as need arises. The makeshift and antiquated theory of interactionism, used by Mr. Pratt to explain the relation between mind and matter, certainly begs the question. The radical issue here is the meaning and status we must ascribe to mind. A philosophy which places mind high up on a mystic shelf is a philosophy which has no light to throw on contemporary problems. Such a philosophy may find consolation in the thought that it envisages the "eternal problems of the human spirit," whatever these be. But eternal visions and high consolations will not save it from the bankruptcy which will come to it because of its irrelevance.

ELISEO VIVAS

The Problem of the Artist

ART AND SOCIETY. By Herbert Read. The Macmillan Company. \$4.

ACCORDING to the front-flap information of this book, Herbert Read's writings on art are "in England the most successful books of that kind published within recent years." No doubt there will be an appreciative audience in America too.

The author, editor of the *Burlington Magazine*, formerly professor of fine arts in the University of Edinburgh and assistant keeper of the Victoria and Albert Museum, tries in a patient, scholarly way to educate his readers toward modern

conceptions of art. For people of a conservative background, with the desire to keep up to date, this book provides a cautious guide through difficult territory. It offers the thrill of attacking present conditions. It speaks of "the degradation of art during the last two centuries" as being "in direct correspondence with the expansion of capitalism." "The world has probably never exhibited such a lack of cultural integrity as now exists in the capitalist form of modern society." About the wealthy patrons he admits exceptions, but as a general rule he considers "such individuals in all matters of sensibility and taste both vulgar and stupid."

On the other hand, he emphasizes that "the typical art of a period is the art of the elite." He hurries to assure us that the classless state as conceived by Marx, Engels, and Lenin by no means involves the abolition of elites. Later on he warns: "Admirable sentiment which, elected into a dogma and given the official support of a totalitarian state, is the true and only necessary explanation of the retarded development of art in Soviet Russia." Thus existing tendencies are criticized with a dignified impartiality backed by quotations from Plato, Hegel, Whitehead, Marx, Freud, Lévy-Bruhl, André Breton, Nikolai Bukharin, and Karl Radek. However, his final conclusions rescue the reader into an idealistic optimism culminating in the statement: "That general release from fear and repression which is promised by the technique of modern psychology no less than by the growing determination to win for humanity the benefits of modern methods of production . . . will recreate the conditions of a great art."

To reach these conclusions Mr. Read mobilizes history, magic, religion, philosophy, and psychology. The chapters on prehistoric art and on the origin of art show the usual pathetic attempt to be "scientific" by leaning on the research of anthropologists and archaeologists, most of whom still seem to cling to a mysterious privilege of carefully preserved innocence in matters of aesthetics and creativeness. Dealing with religion he tries to prove that "religion is not an essential to art; nor art to religion." The problem of the unconscious, based on Freudian conceptions, seems to be his strongest tool to build up the idea of the necessity of freedom of individual expression in art.

In the introduction the author confesses that the purpose of this book was to protest against philistinism à la H. G. Wells and the general art shyness of the Anglo-Saxons, which he considers their worst intellectual disgrace. But in this country, as in other parts of the world, there are many people to whom the problem of art and society means infinitely more. Our brains are tortured by the question whether art can survive, and what can be done about it. Everything seems ready for a great renaissance except this tragic relation of humiliated art to blind society. We are dreaming of a future humanity which will know its debt to the creative miracle of art, and yet we are trembling at the mere thought of a possible catastrophe if, owing to blindness in power, this grandiose chance should be missed. How can artists organize without losing their creative freedom? How can we fight the rackets of the art market? How can the artist become a legitimate member of society, and how can he be educated to be worthy of such a position? Desperate artists in great numbers have dropped their aesthetic quarrels and organized to attack such questions courageously. To American society the problem of art and culture becomes more and more a question of destiny. To artists the social problem has become a matter of life and death. Meanwhile, we have to be grateful for contributions like Mr. Read's book, which admits that "art, like murder, will out."

LEO KATZ

The First Puritans

PARADISE. By Esther Forbes. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$2.50.

"PARADISE" occupies the anomalous position of a historical novel which commands the respect of the historian more readily than it fires the enthusiasm of the literary critic. Considered as literature, it is a respectable job—no more. Neither its style, nor its architecture, nor its analysis of character, nor its view of life is peculiarly its own; it makes, in other words, no Contribution. Yet from the historian's point of view it is, I imagine, a valuable piece of work. For years Stuart Sherman battled in ponderous prose to disabuse the American mind of the belief that "puritan" was a synonym for "gloomy," that the collective life of the New England colonies prior to the Revolution was wholly devoted to asceticism, witch burning, and general sanctimoniousness. Miss Forbes's novel will probably do more to rejuvenate the Founding Fathers for the public than did all Mr. Sherman's long-winded essays.

The book takes its name from the great house of the first citizen of Canaan (founded 1630) in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Jude Parre, the Founder, could write "gentleman" after his signature; and he was, to be sure, no run-of-the-mill Puritan. From a dissolute youth as a vagabond scholar he came to the New World with a rich wife and a belief in individual liberty that was more conscious and more conscientious than was usual in that rather tight-minded society. Yet there was room in the colony both for the tolerance of Mr. Parre and for the hell-and-damnation preaching of the Fearings, Peter and Forethought; and the exponents of these two schools of life could drink ale, malmsey, and rum, smoke a pipe, and enjoy the pleasures of the table together. Miss Forbes makes it clear that the sensory joys of the world were not forbidden the Puritans, however devout. The customs are those of the Restoration period. The settlers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony did not, naturally, bring with them to America the manners of the court, but, inescapably, they brought the customs and dress of the raw and gusty society from which they stemmed, and to which they, even in retreat or rebellion, still belonged. That a pioneer economy demanded a religious dictatorship, that out of the religious dictatorship eventually grew a political democracy, based, ideologically, on the belief in the rights of man, we know. What is ironical is the fact that, before this democracy could even be foreshadowed, the Jude Parres had to be put in their places, for the individualism they stood for was not of the future but of the past, the individualism permitted within the framework of a benevolent feudalism, not the mandatory individualism characteristic of a middle-class economic democracy.

Miss Forbes has written a popular novel, or, as she calls it, a historical romance, and therefore is concerned with emotions rather than ideas; it is love, not social change, on which her attention is focused. Nevertheless, her material has been so conscientiously studied, so fully and accurately recast into fictional terms, that these political conceptions are inherent in her story, as they are in history itself. Those who wish can dig them out of the conflicts of the novel. Those who do not can at least whole-heartedly participate in the narrative, secure in the assurance that they are not, momentarily, living in what a historian would consider a fool's "Paradise."

MARY MC CARTHY

Shorter Notices

THE LAST ROMANTIC. By William Orton. Farrar and Rinehart. \$2.50.

IN TRYING to describe the impact of pre-war England on a young man's mind Mr. Orton has set himself an interesting problem. Moreover, he has chosen a hero who will not swim with the current. His Michael is an artist—without an art; a dreamer and an individualist; he is impractical, sensitive, intelligent. But most of the time he is groping in the dark. He discovers Nietzsche, Walt Whitman, Pater, Ibsen; a good musical education in his boyhood, wherein Bach and Beethoven and Schumann are his gods, breaks into a superficial brilliance and comes to nothing. He knows no disciplines. He is desperately concerned with the problem of religion. He loves accidentally, capriciously, unsatisfyingly. All this as a picture of the chaotic state of education at the tail-end of the Victorian era is well enough. But the novelist who tries to describe chaos must, by a paradox, be himself very clear and bright and well ordered. Mr. Orton is vague and without edge. His hero is surrounded by ghosts—ghosts of ideas, ghosts of men and women; his parents are ghosts, his friends only a little less so. Nothing emerges sharply. Michael's boyhood, his schooling, his father's shop, his casual attempts to find a proper school, a useful trade, are all veiled and unclear. Even his death in battle is a little vague. The result is unsatisfying.

THE GROWN-UPS. By Catharine Whitcomb. Random House. \$2.50.

Miss Whitcomb, with a much less ambitious scheme, has solved her problem more cleverly. Children of divorced parents, she says, are likely to be mauled about by servants, to overhear dreadful grown-up quarrels they do not quite understand; they have no real home, their status at school is dubious; their insecurity makes them unhappy in various ways, but always unhappy. Stated thus baldly, this is the sort of over-emphasis that makes statisticians tear their hair. But Miss Whitcomb is not interested in statistics. She merely presents a couple of children—a little, vague, unprotesting boy and a girl who grows up in spite of her father's various marriages. In the earlier chapters of her book she is clear, explicit, and touching. These are credible children and they say something particularly about such children in general. Later on Miss Whitcomb becomes a little lush; there are too many dazzlingly beautiful women in her novel. But in spite of them she has preached a rather impressive sermon.

PIE IN THE SKY. By Arthur Calder-Marshall. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.50.

Mr. Calder-Marshall is neither historian nor preacher. He merely presents a group of people. A hearty, keen-witted father, a dull, moralistic son, a lively, ineffectual son—and a woman. None of these persons is expertly realized, yet the total effect of the four, along with the incidental characters in the novel, is interesting, credible, and persuasive. These people have various occupations and as many preoccupations; they are bitter, defeated, courageous, humorous. They portray England today rather more successfully than Mr. Orton was able to portray England before the war. Mr. Calder-Marshall does not concern himself very much with what his men and women think—in spite of a number of earnest conversations about the revolution; but he writes rather well of what they do. Which is perhaps the safest way of writing a novel, after all.

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IN SIGHT OF MOUNTAINS. By C. A. Millspaugh.
Doubleday, Doran and Company. \$1.75.

Mr. Millspaugh's first volume follows rather closely a pattern of development that has become familiar in recent poetry. It consists in (a) an apprenticeship in technique to Hopkins, Eliot, and the other reigning masters; (b) an attempt to fit contemporary experience to the demands of a wiry intellect, an acute if tortuous sensibility, and an expectation of human decency; (c) an expression of agony at the partial frustration of these demands; and (d) a reorientation of the self, with a discarding of baggage in preparation for the journey to the Magnetic Mountain. If Mr. Millspaugh's are not among the more original variations upon this common pattern, they are at any rate among the more skilful. He has not yet found the verse type, or set of verse types, most suitable to his talents and insights—probably because these are themselves still fluid—but he uses neatly a great variety of forms, including sprung rhythm, Eliotesque free Alexandrines, Poundian pseudo-Provençal, neo-Grecian strophes, ballad stanzas, and even the sonnet. What impresses most, perhaps, is his feeling for word values, both musical and semantic. This enables him to write lines that sing, and to obtain frequently a direct hit with an epigrammatic phrase or a homely image. There is observation, both inner and outer, in the poems, but this is mostly casual; as with other poets under thirty, the words guide the course of the poem rather than serve effortlessly a central intuition. When he has mastered his craft to the point where it is no longer his primary concern, some very fine work may be expected from him.

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DRAMA

Gentleman Crook

"THE AMAZING DR. CLITTERHOUSE" (Hudson Theater) is an unusually entertaining bit of theatrical piffle, and it will have, I think, better luck than either of the two other English mysteries seen here this year. There is nothing in it to equal the few moments of horror for which "Love from a Stranger" existed, and it lacks the touch of the macabre which made "Night Must Fall" extraordinary, but it does have one virtue which both of those plays lacked. It moves steadily forward under increasing tension, and without seeming ever to force things it allows no moment for question or reflection.

Calmly considered, the premise may seem a little bit thick. After the fall of the curtain one may wonder whether it is, after all, very probable that a highly successful doctor should be led into a career of crime because he is anxious to study the physiological reactions of the burglar while burgling. But even this difficulty is skilfully met, and without ever being specific the play manages to suggest that you may, if you like, suspect the doctor's own explanation and regard it as no more than a subtle rationalization. Indeed, the ambiguous conclusion is one of the most ingenious things in the play and it all seems quite as credible as it needs to be, partly I suspect because the degree of credibility remains the same throughout. In any play we quickly adjust ourselves to the standard the author himself sets. We are as gullible as he

expects us by premise to be, and the great mistake is to introduce anything harder to believe than the things we have initially agreed to accept. That mistake the author of "The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse" never makes. We are never shocked into protest by any improbability greater than we accepted to begin with, and he leads us steadily to a climax and a solution perfectly acceptable because perfectly of a piece with everything which has gone before.

Like most English thrillers, this one scorns the crude violence of its American counterparts. Even its criminal characters are too well bred to favor the "Sez you" type of repartee, without which our native crook plays would be impossible, and Dr. Clitterhouse himself is a credit to the Public School he indubitably attended. Incidentally, he is well played in the best English manner of understatement by Sir Cedric Hardwicke, and all the other roles are well filled—especially that undertaken by Clarence Derwent as the double-crossing (excuse me, treacherous) receiver whose quiet death at the hands of the doctor seems to the audience not only highly desirable in itself but a fitting climax to the hero's career.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

"The Sun and I" (Adelphi Theater), one of the most knowing scripts to emerge from Federal Theater workshops so far, has been favored with a production appropriately urbane and eye-filling. Costumes, settings, and incidental music contribute unstintingly to the task of converting Egypt into theater, but the play itself is inclined to dawdle between frivolity and preachment. In general the authors have recast the story of Joseph and his brethren in a vein of bantering if sympathetic cynicism, appending a Marxian rubric to the Biblical text and streamlining the narrative accordingly. The vision of the bowing sheaves and stars, for example, is accounted for on the basis of a will-to-power, while the stages in Joseph's rise to absolute authority in Egypt are seen as fated contingencies in a career destined from the outset to a fulfilment in benevolent despotism. In the end Joseph's dictatorial methods, for all their good intent, work his undoing, and he speeds the final curtain with the prophecy of a state in which workers will achieve their salvation by their own hand. David Enton as Joseph helps to give direction to the somewhat unclear and discursive conception, and there are careful performances by Frederic Tozere as Pharaoh, Suzanne Caubaye as Vashnee, and Gustave Gordon as Potiphar.

B. B.

FILMS

Alfred Hitchcock

AFTER a month of drought there has come a flood of interesting films—so many, in fact, that a column cannot do justice to them. Or perhaps it can. For justice is among other things a search for the excellent; and in the course of its arduous climb it has every right to deal both rapidly and roughly with the less excellent. I shall begin at the bottom with "The Man Who Could Work Miracles" (Korda), in which the delightful opportunities for trick photography offered by H. G. Wells's tale are defeated by an unimaginative direction and by obvious preachments; also

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by the ridiculously British faces of three young men who ride horses in the clouds and pass remarks about those little fools on earth. I preferred the little fools, particularly Roland Young, whose heroic struggle against impossible odds ought to be recorded among the stars. Ronald Colman staggers under a similar handicap in "Lost Horizon" (Columbia), where a brilliant beginning and a great deal of wonderful photography throughout do not conceal the fact that the message of the movie is shamefully soft and false. The blame for this is probably to be divided between James Hilton and Robert Riskin; I should hate to place it on the director, Frank Capra, who after all gave us "It Happened One Night" and "Mr. Deeds." He has been mechanically superb in "Lost Horizon," but the moral seems to be that mind counts for something even in movies. I think so well of movies, indeed, that I am willing to say it counts for everything, as it does in any other art. A little more of it, for instance, would have dissolved the absurd nobility out of "The Last of Mrs. Cheyney" (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), in which amusing film William Powell, Robert Montgomery, and Joan Crawford make so many sacrifices for one another toward the end that they begin to look bewildered long before Mr. Powell motors politely off to prison. "The Wedding of Palo," an Eskimo film by Knud Rasmussen (Fifty-fifth Street Theater), falls but a trifle short of "Nanook of the North" and "Man of Aran," and "Prisoners" (Amkino) is considerably above the Russian average. But I must hasten on to Alfred Hitchcock, who in "The Woman Alone" (Gaumont-British) seems to me to prove once again that he is the best film director now flourishing.

The maker of "The Thirty-nine Steps" and "The Man Who Knew Too Much" keeps, as always, perfectly within his bounds. His story (from Conrad's "Secret Agent") is a melodrama; his scene is a theater—this time a small London cinema; the streets through which his people occasionally pass are beautiful in their meanness and their truth; he does not spare us several painful deaths; he is merciless with his suspense. But what is more important than all that, Mr. Hitchcock keeps perfectly within the bounds of the movie art. He knows exactly what a movie should be and do; so exactly, in fact, that a live wire seems to run backward from any of his films to all the best films one can remember, connecting them with it in a conspiracy to shock us into a special state of consciousness with respect to the art. There is something old-fashioned about his pictures, as there is about the best things of any kind; and not the only sign of this in "The Woman Alone" is the circumstance that its dialogue is unnecessary without being precisely superfluous. He has told his story with the camera. And how he has told it! The beginning is possibly no more brilliant than the beginning of "Lost Horizon"; but it is only the beginning of something that moves with an actually increasing smoothness and speed to the very end. An analysis of the film would reveal not merely that there were many good details but that there was nothing but detail, and all of it good. Sylvia Sidney in the ticket booth, the boy in the bus, Oscar Homolka at the aquarium and in the turnstile, the episode of the knife and fork—these are only a few among the hundreds. The whole thing is irreducibly concrete, as if a master had decided to show us how much of a virtuoso he could be. And yet the final effect is not a virtuoso effect. It is merely the most interesting story that any film has told this year—the most interesting because Mr. Hitchcock has told it with the simplest, the deepest, and the most accurate imagination at work anywhere.

MARK VAN DOREN

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Letters to the Editors

The Truth About Palestine

Dear Sirs: Practically all of the facts cited by Albert Viton in his articles *The Fate of Zionism* and *A Solution for Palestine*, published in *The Nation* on December 19 and 26, are inaccurate and misleading. In the interest of truth it is necessary to refute at least some of his misstatements. All facts stated herein are taken from official sources.

1. *Displaced Arabs*. Mr. Viton states: "If Jewish settlement continues on its past scale, there can be no doubt that it will spell the ruin of an increasing number of Arab peasants." He goes on to say that 2,000 Arab cultivators have been displaced in the plains of Esdraelon and Acre and a few hundred more around Jaffa.

The truth is that the Arab rural population, which in 1922 was 65.6 per cent of the total Arab population, rose to 67.3 per cent in 1931 (last census). During the same period the settled non-Jewish population increased from 565,000 to 795,000, and to 900,000 in 1936. The Arab population, rural as well as urban, has increased in the greatest numbers in those areas which are centers of Jewish development.

A special commission was appointed by the Palestine government in 1931 to ascertain the number of "displaced Arabs"—that is, those who had to move from their land as a result of its sale or transfer to Jews—for whose resettlement the government of Palestine appropriated the sum of £250,000. Here was an unprecedented situation—a government actually saying: "We have money to spend for settlement. Please put in your application and we shall do our best." And what happened? Mr. Andrews, development officer of the government of Palestine in charge of the resettlement scheme, testified before the Palestine Royal Commission now sitting in Palestine that "the government had to scout around to get people to put in their applications." Mr. Andrews stated that "since 1931 there had been received from landless Arabs [who claimed to have been displaced either before or after 1931] 3,271 applications for resettlement. Of these only 664 fell within the definition, that is, had had to move from their land as a result of its sale or transfer to Jews; and of the 664 families, 317 declined on various

grounds to take up holdings offered and 347 families had been provided for upon government estates." Mr. Andrews further stated that among those who had submitted their claims for resettlement were families who had left their land long before it was sold or transferred to Jews; families who had had to leave the land because of sale to non-Jews; unsuccessful cultivators with livestock and money who had voluntarily abandoned their land; and unsuccessful traders who at no time had been cultivators of land. It should be added that of the 664 families whose claims were recognized, only 460 were actual cultivators, the others being "tribesmen" and not cultivators.

But even these facts do not tell the whole story. The Land Transfer Ordinance provides that any person wishing to sell his land must first obtain the consent of the government. In the case of agricultural land leased by tenants, such consent is to be given only if the Registrar of Lands is satisfied that "any tenant in occupation will retain sufficient land in the district or elsewhere for the maintenance of himself and his family." While the law places upon the selling landowner the burden of compensating the tenant, the Jews, who were not obligated to do so, have paid in addition to the purchase price handsome sums to the Arab tenants who were made to move. And in addition these tenants were being settled, as shown before, at government expense.

The utter absurdity of the charge that Jews have displaced Arabs in Palestine is even more apparent when one learns that while the non-Jewish population, rural and urban, has increased by about 70 per cent since the World War, the so-called displaced Arabs constitute only 1/3 of 1 per cent of the total Arab population!

2. *Jewish Agricultural Settlement*. The Jews at present own approximately 1,300,000 dunams of land, which is only 5 per cent of the total area of Palestine. Mr. Viton declares that there is little chance for the settlement of an additional large number of Jews on the land because, first, it is impossible to settle Jews without displacing Arabs, and, secondly, cultivable land for additional settlement is not available.

What is "cultivable land"? Mr. Viton

apparently accepts the definition of the Palestine government that cultivable land is land "which is actually under cultivation or which may be cultivated by the application of resources which are at the disposal of the average Palestinian cultivator." By this definition the cultivability of land is not determined by its inherent qualities or by the application of scientific methods, but is governed by the "resources" of the "average Palestinian cultivator," meaning the average Arab cultivator. By reducing this proposition to its dryly logical conclusion, it would follow that since the average cultivator has no resources, there is no cultivable land available.

If this definition were applied, such large agricultural centers as Petach Tikvah, Rishon-le-Zion, Hederah, Ain Harold, Nahalal, and scores of other settlements, extending over tens of thousands of dunams and providing sustenance to scores of thousands of Jews—and many Arabs—could not have been established, all having been founded on "uncultivable" land. Since 1930 over fifty new agricultural settlements have been established—without displacement, as shown—on "uncultivable land."

No attempt has yet been made to ascertain what portion of the land now held to be "uncultivable"—more than one-half of the total area of Palestine—could be rendered cultivable by the application of the man-power, capital, skill, scientific methods, and, above all, *will* which the Jews are eager to bring to this land. It is not possible now to determine the number of Jewish families which can ultimately be settled on the land, for that land is cultivable which eventually will be cultivated. The Huleh area in the north of Palestine is a good example. In 1930 Sir John Hope Simpson called it "a plague spot." For the most part it was covered by malarial swamps providing a meager existence for a few impoverished inhabitants. It was not cultivated, and according to the government's definition it certainly was not cultivable, for the "average Palestinian cultivator" did not have the means, let alone the vision, desire, and energy, to reclaim it. Now, only a few years later, the whole Huleh area, extending over about 55,000 dunams, is being developed by Jews under a concession from the Palestine government

by the terms of which 15,000 dunams—reclaimed and fit for immediate use—will be reserved for the settlement of Arabs, *who are not asked to contribute one red cent toward the cost of reclamation and amelioration.* Thousands of families, Jewish and Arab, will thus be settled on formerly "uncultivable" land.

3. *Industry.* Mr. Viton states that "the present rate of industrial development cannot be maintained in the future. In fact, it would appear that most of the industries have already reached the peak of development." He adds that "industry cannot develop much more except for industries depending on locally grown fruit."

Despite the lack of help by the government, the absence of raw material, the lack of trained labor, insufficient credit, undeveloped markets, and many other difficulties, Palestine's industry has made, in Mr. Viton's own words, "tremendous progress in a short time." Industrial production, which in 1921-22 was valued at £500,000, reached £8,500,000 in 1935. The number of employees in industry rose during the same period from 4,750 to 32,830.

Sales of electric power by the Palestine Electric Corporation increased from 2,527,126 kilowatt hours in 1927 to 34,385,515 kilowatt hours in 1934, and to 50,362,193 kilowatt hours in 1935. But Mr. Viton, late in 1936, gave electric consumption figures only for 1934 and asserted that "this rate of development . . . cannot be maintained in the future." However, electric consumption in 1935 was 45 per cent higher than in 1934, and figures for the first ten months of 1936 (latest available) show an increase in electric consumption of 31 per cent over the same period in 1935.

While the world index of industrial production fell from 100 in 1929 to 76 in 1934, that of Jewish industry in Palestine rose from 100 in 1929 to 320 in 1935. The development of industry in Palestine represents the creation of an entirely new source of wealth which, but for Jewish resourcefulness, capital, and love for the country, would never have come into existence.

Mr. Viton's description of the status of the Arabs, labor conditions and wages, employment situation, standard and cost of living, capital available for investment, density of population, and so on are also incorrect and misleading.

MAURICE BOUKSTEIN, Director,

New York Bureau, American Economic Committee for Palestine
New York, February 1

The Important Thing

Dear Sirs: Few things just now make me angrier than the reiterated suggestion that Germany should have some colonies in order that she may get raw materials from them. The most important thing in a so-called colony is the people; and people ought not to be disposed of on the basis of somebody's desire for the vegetable products of their country.

Specifically, a non-Aryan population ought not to be put under a government whose avowed principle is that non-Aryans are not entitled to equal rights. Grant, if you like, that other governments hypocritically act on this principle without avowing it; even so, the black man is better off under a power which at least recognizes that agitation for the black man's rights is legitimate public discussion. Furthermore, those who are willing to pay for raw materials can get them in the market; when a power says that it must have colonies as a source of raw materials, that implies that it wants a chance to get them without paying—in other words, by plunder.

STEVEN T. BYINGTON

Ballard Vale, Mass., March 4

Condemned to Death

Dear Sirs: I have just received from the Spanish government a cablegram which is self-explanatory:

The President of Oviedo University, Dr. Leopoldo Alas, has been sentenced to death by the rebel junta. We entertain well-founded fears that the sentence is going to be carried out. This eminent intellectual has been inactive in politics since before the fascist rebellion. In his charges against Dr. Alas the prosecutor has stated: "The most rigorous repression must begin with those who by virtue of their intellectual capacity and culture are responsible for the poisoning of the Spanish conscience and for all the blood that has been shed."

The charges against Dr. Alas are grounded solely on trivial facts which occurred long before the rebellion and are wholly disconnected with the uprising. The crimes charged to him are the following: his having been Under Secretary of Justice and member of the House of Representatives during the first republican government, from 1931 to 1933; his having taken part in public gatherings of the Left Republican Party; his having lectured in favor of the establishment of a public and non-sectarian educational system; his having taken part, as a spectator, in an open meeting in which the pardon of Thälmann was requested; and even his having once stated in a press interview that all professional journalists should be expected to possess a degree of culture superior to that of the average man.

During the trial several of his university colleagues testified favorably to his conduct as professor and as president of the university. The whole trial is a juridical monstrosity and a typical example of the persecution of intellectuals, professors, and Catholic loyalists by the rebels. The University of Paris and other universities in France and Belgium have wired the Burgos junta asking the commutation of the death sentence.

If you find it advisable, I should deeply appreciate your doing everything possible to intercede in favor of Dr. Alas.

FERNANDO DE LOS RIOS,
Former President of Madrid University
Washington, February 15

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MURIEL RUKEYSER is the author of "Theory of Flight," a volume of poems which was included in *The Nation's* list of the sixty outstanding books of 1936. She has just completed for spring publication a prose account of the first week of the war in Catalonia, "Savage Coast."

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